

॥ Shri Hari ॥

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BE GOOD



Swami Ramsukhdas

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Be Good

tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva
tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva
tvameva vidyā draviṇaṁ tvameva
tvameva sarvaṁ mama devadeva

Swami Ramsukhdas

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Humble Submission

Wherever our Most Reverend Swamiji Shri Ramsukhadasji Maharaj camps his stay, he delivers a series of discourses after the everyday singing of hymns and chanting of Gita-verses right at 5 O' Clock in the morning. These talks are of extreme use and value for the seekers of God's love and Self-realization. A few among such discourses have been selected and are being published in the form of the present book. This collection of talks is culled from the 'Chaturmasya-Satsanga' (Two month's holy company) conducted by Shri Swamiji at Jodhpur in 1986, V.S. 2043.

Each and every human being is entitled to God-realization and he can realize Him in each and every circumstance—such is the essence or core of these discourses. To fully understand and appreciate the import and implications of this subject, the readers are expected to go through these discourses and meditate upon them with faith, devotion and loving concern.

—Publisher



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Be Good

If man regards his thing i.e., God as his own and the extraneous thing i.e., body— world as not his own, then he becomes at once liberated—there is not an iota of doubt about it. In the Gītā where there are mentioned the traits of a “Guṇātīta” great-man i.e., of one who has transcended the three-fold attributes of nature, there he is spoken of as a “Samaduḥkhasukhaḥ swasthaḥ” i.e., one who is stationed in his own being and is equanimous in moments of sorrow and happiness (14/24). Such a man is a liberated soul. To expect anything from outside is a big cowardice and a huge frailty of nature. This timidity or feebleness is a concoction, a made up thing; it is not inherent in the being. Where is the weakness or difficulty in regarding one’s thing as one’s own, in being oneself, and in regarding extraneous things as not one’s own?

What other people will speak of me, or think of me is a fear which can cause great loss and meaninglessness in life. One should shed this fear away and be bold and courageous. Will others not talk ill of us if we go on fearing about how others hold us in their view? Whether we fear or not, they will talk the way they like. Not subjecting us to the spell of fear in view of other ones’ opinions, it is always gainful to stick fast to our righteous convictions and to go along the path of truth and goodness without any sense of fear.

Just a day or two ago, I mentioned in reference to a talk; there is one significant thing in your becoming bold and fearless; and, it is that if anybody speaks bad of you then you can look into your own self from your own viewpoint, find out whether or not you have committed any error of omission or commission, whether you have perpetrated any act of injustice. In this way the more you can trust yourself, live with firm resolve and conviction, and thus be yourself, more speedily and steadily your fears will flee and vanish. Why at all should we fear when we have not committed any mistake? Let us then be firm on our own path and in our own emotion and activity. This is a source of great strength. In that very reference I had averred that I had personally acted on this belief with beneficial experience which you may verify by your own. When we are right and truthful, there is no reason for us to fear. Many senseless things occur for want of faith in one's own self. It's no use to expect anything from outside, to desire good from others or to seek others' appreciation when we are sure that our action is right, thought noble, emotions sublime and intention well-gearred. Fear no one's ill opinion about you. Of what avail other ones' good opinion about us can ever be if intrinsically we are not good ourselves?

Q. What if we fail or miss to perceive our own error?

Swāmījī—The main reason of our inability to perceive our own mistake is selfishness and pride. Selfishness and pride blurs our vision with such a lid or layer that we do

not see our own mistakes. Thus avoid pride and selfishness. By renouncing ego and selfishness much light would be released and our mistake would be obviously visible.

One way is to do away with whatever vices we can reckon in ourselves. The recurrence of such practice would enable not only to see but to free oneself from such vices quite easily. This is a most effective way, easy to adopt, and beneficial in result. Adopt and see the value of this remedy yourself.

By being in the holy-company (Satsaṅga) whatever vices or weaknesses become discernible in our life, and whatever can be easily avoided or remedied, should be so done. Imagine for example that I am in habit of telling a lie, that lie which is least concerned with my worldly gain or monetary possibilities. I should not utter such a lie. We tell a lie quite meaninglessly. For example, "Oh brother, get up, it is noon, the sun is up, why don't you get up?" If we speak the truth—"the sun has dawned. It is morning. Please get up"—we lose nothing. Where is the harm in it? Habits are spoilt by meaningless lies.

The vice which is clearly visible, which requires no effort in removing it, and there is no harm in doing it, you root it out. Then other vices will become clearly patent and discernible. Do not worry if you cannot see your vice, but do not also hold any, for there is no room for vices in the self. It should be our intention or aim that we do not cultivate any vice or keep any deficiency in us.

If you cannot reform yourself, can you ever reform

others? The truth is that even after having reformed one's own self, one cannot reform any other in any way. There have been great sages and seers, even Ācāryas, they also could not reform others, could not make others of their own like. I do not complain nor accuse, but with great respect I name them and enquire; did the great Śaṅkarācārya create another Śaṅkarācārya? Did Rāmānujācārya create another Rāmānujācārya? Did Vallabhācārya Mahārāja create another Vallabhācārya? If the disciple wants, he can be brighter than the Guru, but the Guru cannot make him so. Please think a little on the point. It is in your hand to make yourself the best possible man, but it is outside you to make others best.

All those who have been best Gurus, their main endeavour has been to see that their disciples excel them and be better than what they themselves are. They do not want to keep the disciples lower than them. Those who want their disciples to live under their subjection or under their thumb, have no right to be called Guru. Guru mints Gurus not 'Celās'. The scripture tells—

‘sarvato jayamicchet putrādicchet parābhavam’

i.e., Let man desire to win or register victory all over, but let him desire defeat at the hands of his son etc. An honest father should inculcate the keenness that his son excels him in glory and splendour. Similarly an honest Guru should harbour the desire that his disciple should outgrow him in the power of penance, glory and wisdom. But by his such a desire the disciple does not become

splendid or brighter. Albeit, if he (son or Celā) personally so intends, he can rise to such heights of spiritual illumination—this is a stark truth. There was at ‘KheRāpā’ one great mystic, named Śrī Rāmadāsajī Mahārāja. His disciple was Śrī Dayālajī Mahārāja. There have been many such Sādhus of ‘KheRāpā’ who do not remember Śrī Rāmadāsajī Mahārāja as much as they do remember Śrī Dayālajī Mahārāja. Not merely of ‘KheRāpā’, but Sādhus of other places also daily recite the “Karuṇā Sāgara” of Saint Śrī Dayālajī Mahārāja. Ponder a little over it, please. How wonderful a thing it is; if you spot out your own vices and go on removing them, then you would be brighter than your Guru. There is not the slightest doubt about it. A secret desire which finds place in the heart of the Gurus is that their disciples should be better than themselves. Whoever have been the teachers or missionaries, preachers of great reknown and Gurus of pure-heart, their one chief emotion has been that their disciples should be among the best ones and their betters. We have seen such Gurus. Ours was Śrī Vidyā Gurujī Mahārāja. His solemn desire was to see that all of us be the best ones. We, the boys used to read in the night beside the lamp. Whenever we felt sleepy, he would see through the window and say “Oh! what are you doing?” We were under constant apprehension that Mahārāja was ever beholding us. He used to stealthily come, see and enquire thereafter : “Why were you standing there? What were you doing like that?” He had a great longing to instruct and educate the students, and prepare them accordingly. He told me time and again : “I wish

that if there be any occasion for arbitrating a case, any scriptural problem of discovering the true import and meaning of the word, then our Śukadeva should be the deciding Judge". All should enquire from him and he should deliver the final verdict—I wish to see this". He also told me that he could not make me as he intended to. Obviously, thus, the ideal or good Gurus are of such substance. Even parents share this nature. They wish that our disciple, our son should be a step ahead of us in guts and grandeur but they cannot make him so. A disciple or son can, if he intends, become brighter, there is no doubt about it. That's why it is said in the Gītā :

**uddharedātmanātmānam nātmānamavasādayet,
ātmaiva hyātmano bandhurātmaiva ripurātmanaḥ.**

(6/5)

Thus if you be right in your state, you will be the best one—not an iota of doubt is there. Do not expect that people should call you good. The fear that someone might call me bad is a ladder of fall. If you fear like this, you will never make a rise. How will he rise who decides on the basis of other people's certificates? This is not in your hand that all people should simultaneously hail you as good. People will point out in you even that vice which is not there in your life—'avācyavādāṁśca bahūnvadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ' (2/36) i.e., many will speak unworthy utterances to your disadvantages. People are of this habit. They know in their heart for certain that this is not so, but still they would say that to tease you, to cause pain to you.

Nowadays, those who contest elections to earn more votes for a win they definitely know that the person against whom they are contesting is a far better person than their own self, but still they would speak ill of him and denounce him to suggest their own candidature as the best one. The sum is : be good yourself without expecting people to call you good. Knowing that you are good, they would not call you so, but say bad of you instead. They do not have the courage to call you good. What a big blunder it is to expect that people should call you good ! Give up the desire to be called good. Be good.

Real Greatness

You experience in yourself the feeling of greatness or lowliness in view of things that are subject to production and destruction—this is a big blunder. For example, certain people regard themselves as great ones in view of the wealth they own, few consider themselves great because big bungalows are in their possession, others feel great by wearing fine dresses, while still others proclaim their greatness owing to the high office of decorum or dignity they occupy; there are, however, few ones who regard themselves quite low or small in view of the non-availability of these things. This is a very big mistake. You are yourself an inalienable, sparkling part of God and are consciousness ! And, you hold yourself big or small in relation to inert gross material things only—this is nothing but lowliness of your attitude ! You are the earner and enjoyer of these things, knower of their beginning and their end as well. Why yet should you be a slave of such things? Riches come and go, friendly listeners meet and part away in life. Once we know this simple truth, what a mistake do we commit by feeling big or small only on their count ! Think a little, please, and immediately it would strike your intelligence that if you are great merely because you occupy a high or significant rank, then you are really small as you are; dignity is only of the office. If we are great by obtaining wealth, then the greatness lies not in us but only in the wealth. We are not great. Sooner we realize this,

better it is that we should never feel high or low on the strength of things which are mere transitory or of fleeting nature.

You are yourself immensely great. Ordinarily, you are part and parcel of the Supreme Divine Being i.e., God, but in case you ascend to sublimely devotional heights, you are the crest-jewel of Divinity. God Himself says :

“I am the Servant of My devotees,

Devotees My Crest-jewel be !”

māim to hū bhagatanakā dāsa, bhagata mere mukuṭamaṇi

You are really that whom God calls His crest- jewel ! When does one become a devotee? The moment redemption from the grossness of materiality (JaRatā) is attained, that very moment you are a devotee ! Therefore, you should from this very moment hold in your mind the firm resolve that you would not view yourself in high or low esteem on the basis of petty things that have origin and endings. You do earn and own these perishables, use and enjoy them but not weigh your being great or otherwise on their count. The balloon of your ego is pumped full-blown on their airy strength and there lies the rub ! Please tell me where is the difficulty in apprehending this simple truth ! If there is none, then accept the wisdom of this reality just now. It brooks no delay. It demands no preparation, expects no special intelligence, no extra power or stamina, nor any uncommon ability on your part. Accept for God’s sake that you will not consider yourself great because of the belongings of mutable and ephemeral nature. For, such an

orientation is nothing but mere subjection or slavery. A slave person can never be happy even in dreams—‘parādhīna sapanehū sukhu nāhīm’ (Mānasa, Bāla. 102/3). We are God’s and God is ours—if you firmly believe this, then alone you will be truly great in the real sense.

“Being in body finite (Jīva) is fraction divine of God eternal !

Conscious, pious, ocean of happiness and bliss natural !!”

[Mānasa, Uttara. 117/1]

When does he become really unhappy in spite of his being the fount eternal of happiness? Only when he accepts the slavish subjugation of the objects perishable and transitory, he grows sad, morose and sorrowful. You don’t want sorrow at all, but you systematically pile up the materials of unhappiness only and wilfully slip into the slavery of perishable goods. There is no happiness in slavishness, not even in dreams!

Enquiring Listener : More people flock to him who is virtuous? Is that the sign of people’s greatness ?

Swāmījī : If very many go to one because he is a man of virtues, then too you must be clear that virtues are not his real nature. These have also been acquired. If he is emptied of good qualities or virtues, then people will not go to him at all. Please think : how can man be great or big because people happen to go to him. Is not then his bigness dependent on external factors? Does a person become high or low, big or small because many people go to him or do not go to him? This is dependence on others—how can this be greatness?

This is nothing but all dependence on others—‘Parādhīnatā’—if we view ourselves as great because of virtues we possess, or because of our better learning and education, or because more people give us more and more honour and hold us in high esteem ! Of what avail shall it ever be whether we have or don’t have virtues or whether or not more people pay regards to us? We remain what we are ! For, how can one be really great or otherwise only because more people regard him so? Do people become low or small because people treat them so? Can greatness ever be given or taken away by people? How can anyone be happy who regards his greatness or dignity dependent on other ones’ opinions? Opinions are never stable. A slavery to opinions is no test of greatness. You collect money, pile up bank balances, create a rich store of precious stones, pearls, rubies etc., and begin to think that you are a big man enjoying a high social status ! If that be the case, you are certainly mistaken. Make the best use of your riches and put your prosperity in the service and welfare of people. It will be mere humiliation if you are big only by belongings of virtues or wealth you own!

God is not subject to coming and going. He is ever present. If you sincerely begin belonging to God, you will be ‘really’ great. If you really grow great, you will never be touched by the pride of greatness, or by the fear of smallness. You lose nothing if others hold you low in esteem. Nor do you gain anything by the praise of others. If you be yourself, identify yourself with the eternal God,

the great overlordship of the universe, and acknowledge your relationship with God in right perspective, then you will be truly great, great in the real sense. Then you will not be swayed by the so-called greatness showered on you or withdrawn from you by other one's opinion !

It is verily a bondage to hold oneself high or great merely on the strength of things and opinions of ephemeral or transitory nature. Bondage is not an animal ! Redemption from this very thralldom is liberation. You are free the moment this bond is cast off. Tell me : don't you be self-reliant, free and liberated when you do not depend for your being on fleeting opinions and belongings that endure not ?

Listener : You are right, Holy Sire !

Swāmījī : If it is all right, then why should we remain dependent? Please, be merciful and from this very moment thoughtfully accept that you will not regard yourself big or high simply because of the chair or the official position you occupy; not even by virtue of wealth are you going to feel yourself great. Neither we are big because very many people praise and honour us nor we shall feel low because people denounce or decry us. Can you in essence accept and believe this truth or not? Tell me.

Listener : Yes, we can do so.

Swāmījī : Then, why delay at all? For whom are you waiting? For what sort of circumstance are you waiting, for whose particular power or might are you waiting? Which time, whose support or succour, whose instructions you are awaiting now? For whom are you awaiting? tell

me. I pray unto you that from just now you resolve that you would never regard yourself big or small, high or low on the count of petty things of transitory nature. The Lord hath said :

‘āgamāpayino’nityāstāmstitikṣasva

bhārata’

(Gītā 2/14)

i.e., things and beings which are perishable, and impermanent—bear or brook them. To tolerate them is to be free from the totality of impact, their coming and going out of existence might otherwise cause. In such a state of freedom, there is bound to be a boundless peace of mind and blissful blessedness of heart. Do it and see it for yourself. True it is ! I cast no deception ! You will feel extremely unburdened and enjoy supreme bliss as if you have escaped from sinking into death-dealing morass.

□ □

How to Serve?

Listener : We do want to serve but we have with us neither wealth, nor wisdom, nor strength, nor ability, nor capacity, nor any other material with which we can serve. Please tell, in what way can then we serve?

Swāmījī : Very fine question, indeed. Its answer would not be of any lesser value, please listen to it attentively. The meaning of service is : the person served should be pleased; his good should be accomplished. What else can service be other than this that he should be pleased in the present and the end-result of the service should secure to him his good or well-being (Kalyāṇa)?

When we have no power whatsoever, how can then we gain his pleasure? For this I will speak to you of a highly valuable thing from my view-point. There is a rich man. He happens to suffer big losses, or, catch a deadly disease, or his son expires—in such a state of his life, you just accord your affirmation to his losses or bereavement and express your hearty concern for it. You can share his anxiety and sorrow by giving him a feel of your mind that the loss was really bad and untimely. This way of consoling him by being of one mind with him will bring you his approval, his pleasure. This will be his service by you. In the same way, enormous sums of wealth fall to someone's lot and he becomes rich, his son is well-educated, then you should be heartily happy and tell 'what a wonderful fortune

you have, God has done you good !' He will be pleased thereby.

In the description of saint's character it is written : 'para dukha dukha sukha sukha dekhe para' (Mānasa 7/38/1) i.e., he is pained by other ones' sorrows and is happy by other ones' happiness. Such a sort of service you can render even when you do not possess wealth, power or material goods. You can feel in your heart that you are not capable enough to do any kind of material or other service to people—what to do? If you are pained by the pain of others, and are pleased by the pleasures of others without any motive, then, too, you would have done immense service. People really beget peace by seeing or by being in the company of people who have such noble selfless thoughts and feelings of natural goodness towards others !

'We will serve others by wealth and do good to them thereby'—is a very gross mentality. I may say it is a mean mentality! Because by such a service importance is attached only to 'money' and not to service. He who gives importance to wealth or riches is a mean man. That which is your hand's product, to that you give more importance than to yourself, and you deem money's necessity for rendering service, this is a very bad mind or low attitude indeed! Service done through wealth etc., is a factor in generating ego or sense of pride, in doing dishonour; because you will impose your ego by serving him through wealth, by giving him the feel that you have helped him to that extent. If he perchance, goes against you, then you

will denounce him, speak ill of him that though you helped him so much, he turned out to be an ungrateful wretch! Thus it will create an air of conflict. If you serve somebody with your wisdom or intelligence and if others also do the same kind of service, then it will create envy or jealousy. We deliver fine lectures and if the lectures of others happen to be finer or better than ours, then the result would be 'jealousy'. We say we serve the people, but in reality we only wage a war.

Few and far between are they who really serve people. We tell you the glory of 'Rāma-Nāma', we yoke people in the act of recitation of Lord's name; but if any other one comes and tells you to do Name's recitation, it does not make much appeal to you. If you engage yourself in doing Nāma-Japa on our telling you, we are pleased; but if anyone begins to do Nāma-Japa at the behest of other people's telling, we do not get pleased that much. We should instead be more pleased because without our effort our work has been done !

If somebody does not conform to our views, does not believe in our doctrines and rebuts and refutes instead our beliefs, doctrines and ways of spiritual practices, but propagates at the same time the glory and greatness of 'Rāma-Nāma', then what sort of mental reactions it is going to produce in us? The Name's propagation will certainly make an appeal to us, but this will not be palatable that the people recite the Name of God at his calling, because he refutes our opinions, rebuts our doctrines and condemns our method of 'Sādhana'. This way we do not give as much importance

to the propagation of Rāma-Nāma as to the refutation. We are not lovers of Rāma's Name, but we are lovers more of our views, more of our Guru. If you respect and regard our Gurujī, then it is alright. But if you do not believe in our Gurujī and yet you carry on the Name's recitation, it will do you no spiritual good—such view belongs to those who love their opinions much more than they love the Name of the Lord ! If the glory of Name is dear to your heart, then even a staunch atheist, or, even the lowest of the low ones sings the glory of God's Name, your heart must dance with enthusiasm and feel intrinsically immensely happy that he has sung the best thing. Its name is—'Service'.

Other's 'Sadāvrata'—systematized arrangement to distribute food gratis to the Sādhus etc.,—is going on well, he provides commendable food, and all hold it in high esteem; their glory in public is on ascendancy. But look at us, we too have organized 'Sadāvrata', but none talks good glory about us. In such a case, does the feeling of jealousy make its seat in our heart, or not? If jealousy overpowers your heart, then think that 'service' rendered by you is not fine or good. In actuality, we should feel happy that at that 'Sadāvrata' very good food is served, though at ours it is only an ordinary food. We do some work for the good of the people, and if that very work is started by others, then we feel jealous of them. Well, we are not then rendering any service to people; it is merely an illusion of service !

If in whatever manner and by whomsoever, service is to be rightly rendered, then we certainly feel highly pleased. He, who provides service, and having seen to whom

service is rendered, we should feel highly elated and happy. How good and dignified the thing is ! We, for example, have no money, not even a cowrie, to invest in the service of people; what is the difficulty in this? It requires no materials, no resources; it requires only your heart ! Service is rendered not by materials, but by heart !

People are under the spell of illusion when they think they will serve in such and such way if they have that much of money. It needs to be thought that they who have ample of money, do they serve people? They do not do any service to people, but we shall do so. Shall we? See when wealth pours into your coffers ! No service will be done. The time when wealth swells in your possession, this emotion of service which heartily entertains in your mind today will not stay. Emotion will undergo a change. We have seen such people. I do not talk from books only. One gentleman from Calcutta used to do the work of a broker and also used to come to Swargāśrama at Rṣikeśa for 'Satsaṅga'. Highly noble was his nature. He used to tell that though he was a broker he comes to Satsaṅga leaving aside his brokership. But these people have tremendous wealth and yet they do not attend the Satsaṅga! What obstacles can ever prevent them from coming to Satsaṅga? But with the passage of time when he himself became a rich man enjoying rich prosperity, his visits to Satsaṅga became few and far between. He does not get any time to come to Satsaṅga now. The reason is that when wealth grows, the business also expands and when business prospers, there is always felt a dearth of time. Thus till

there is no capital or wealth, the thoughts and emotions are quite different and when wealth swells, the earlier emotions budge off. Some, however, there are whose emotions are stable and do not undergo a change, but they are brave people who have digested their growing wealth and prosperity. Wealth is often too hard to digest; it creates indigestion. Even power and position create indigestion; they cannot be easily stomached. Earlier there does spring up the idea that if we grow in strength and power, we will do service to the people in this or that matter, but having become strong and powerful they suppress the weaker people. When they come to seek votes, they tell at that time that they will complete such and such programmes of activities of public service and utility; but when they become ministers, they do not come back and have no time to meet the voters. Is this service? This is not service, but selfishness. One man who happened to visit a village told the villagers, "You have so much of dirt, filth and foul piled up here and there in your village, Why? Does no sweeper come for cleansing the village?" They replied—the sweeper does come but only after an interval of five years! Nobody comes earlier. When demand for votes comes, the sweeper also comes.

When somebody else does any service, why should we feel bad about it? Why are his praises sung and why are we not praised? He has opened centres of food distribution, established an educational institute and begun addressing the people and therefore only his glory is heard and not ours. Is this an act of service or an intention of self-glorification?

Try it on the touchstone and then see what it is. Service is only a pretext. Evil creeps under the shadow of goodness.

‘kālanemi jimi rāvana rāhū’

There is a polish of goodness on the surface, but deep within is filled all evil. This evil is dangerous. An open evil is not so dangerous as is the concealed evil.

He, who has a real zeal or emotion to serve others, he will be pained by the pains of others and pleased by the happiness of others. Can anyone, who does not become happy or unhappy by the happiness or unhappiness of others, do any real service to the people? Till he does not become miserable by the sorrows of others or mirthful by the pleasures of other people, there will be no service at all. He, who becomes sad by seeing the gloom of others, he will share his pleasures with others, rather he will provide all happiness to others without keeping any for his own self; and he who becomes happy by seeing others happy, will not have to collect anything for his own happiness. Please learn it by rote that he who becomes sorrowful by other people's sorrows does not have to become unhappy by his own unhappiness; and he who becomes happy by the happiness of others need not have to collect materials and objects of joy for his personal happiness.

Ego will develop and pride grow if you put the materials obtained from the world into the service of people, by regarding the materials as your own. Therefore goods and materials are not at all necessary for serving the people, only heart is.

Goal of Human Life

Listener : How are we to determine that God-realization is the goal of our life? Since wealth is also worthy of being obtained, honour and status are also worth obtaining, comforts and conveniences are also obtainable, so many things are thus to be achieved, the question arises as to how to be sure that 'God-realization' is the goal of our life?

Swāmījī : Is there anybody among you who wants such a happiness which is not perfect or complete, which is incomplete and transitory? Does anybody want such a life which should not always be; we should be living some time and not live at another time? Who wants such a life? Does anybody wish for such a knowledge which is incomplete? We want such happiness which should never end. We want such life which should always be. We want such knowledge which is supreme and perfect without the least faint of incompleteness therein. Such a longing is in fact, the longing for the Supreme truth of life, God. Save God there is nothing which is eternal, perfect and absolute. We hush up the desire to seek Truth by petty worldly desires and become happy or unhappy at times and intervals.

Even a dog is pleased by happiness in small measures. A donkey too gets pleased that way. That happiness should be achieved which is in no way incomplete, which is perfect in itself. The world cannot provide such happiness

which has no deficiency or shortcoming. Thus worldly pleasure or happiness is not our goal; it is not our destiny. Please think for yourself that, that kind of happiness which is eternal, indivisible, without permitting any deficiency is only in one supreme entity, the Lord-of-all. In whatever measure the worldly things may be achieved, wealth, glory, kingdom, honour, grandeur, status etc., may fall to our lot, but that cannot give us contentment or full satisfaction. On the contrary, let there be 'more of it', yes, still 'more of it', such grows the greedy desire for them.

We want to live, it means that we are dying, or else why should there have been a longing to live? It is true that there is a desire to live. Having understood and known much in the world, there still lurks a desire to know ever more. Having obtained things in plenty, the desire to have more and more persists. Having done a lot in life, there is always a keenness to entertain the idea that though much has been done, yet this much has still to be accomplished. This sort of deficiency or incompleteness which is felt in knowing, gaining, doing etc., needs to be recognised by man. It must be realised that this deficiency the world can never remove. The whole world may be achieved and yet this emptiness can never be filled, because the world is impermanent and ever changing. But, think a little, what will happen once God is realised. In this regard, the Gītā says—

“yaṁ labdhvā cāparam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ”

(Gītā 6/22)

i.e., “having realised whom there is no gain higher than that”. Such is his experienced belief which none can shake. Having established himself in such a perfect state of God-realization, even the heaviest affliction born of stormy situations in life cannot in the least shake him from his rock-like faith—

“yasminsthito na dukhena guruṇāpi vicālyate”

Even if he is sandwiched between the two conflicting mighty rocks and his body is crushed, then too he is not dislodged or dissuaded from his unison with the Supreme Self by that excruciating pain. That pain has no access there. The pain cannot even touch that soulful state. Happiness is so much there that there can be no higher bliss than that. No sorrow can even cast its shadow on it. Tell, who wants such a blissful blessedness? People get contented even in small shares (Alpa); that is a very big mistake.

The seekers do commit such a big error that while following the path, they get pleased or contented with elementary success midway. There is a Mārawārī saying : ‘ādhe kutte kholana hī khīra hai’ i.e., for a blind dog even the ‘Kholana’ (i.e., water with which the utensil of vegetables etc., was washed from inside) is as good as rice cooked with milk (Khīra). Similarly, persons there are who become highly pleased even with the achievement of little wealth, wisdom, honour and fame, in the world. What is, in reality, achieved? The worldly achievement whatever it is, is indeed a deception. We need to realize the Supreme and superiormost truth! Even if we need wealth, it must

be of the best and highest nature. Whatever we want, whether wisdom, riches, honour, status, praise, life, we want it to be of the noblest, purest and highest order. None can uproot this fundamental desire of man's heart! And, nothing short of God-realization can satiate this deep-seated longing, because the Supreme Tattva is no other than God Himself. Arjuna says :

na tvatsamo'styabhyadhikah kuto'nyo

lokatraye'pyapratimaprabhāva

(Gītā 11/43)

i.e., 'Thou are of illimitable power and effect'; there is none like You; how can then anybody be more or higher than what You are ! Achievement of such a supreme thing should thus be the goal of our life.

That Tattva which was realized in ancient times by the earlier great ones, the sages and seers, saints and Sādhus, Sanakādika and Devarṣi Nārada, Brahmā, Śaṅkara etc.,—that very truth is realizable and can be realized even now in this Kaliyuga today. The worldly goods cannot be obtained by one and all, but God can be realized by everybody. There is not a single man for whom God is inaccessible ! Realization of that supreme truth, God alone, is the goal of human life.

My aim is God-realization—only man is capable enough to realize this thing; not any other living being! Amongst living beings, cow is a very holy animal, but we cannot make her understand this truth. Ponder a little, please, on the point. You come to Satsaṅga so early

morning from distances everyday. Do you get here any amount of wealth? Any sensual enjoyments? Any honour? Any gain? What profit you earn here? If not any, then tell me what brings you here for Satsaṅga so early in pre-dawn hour?

Listener : We get peace and solace to our Soul !

Swāmījī : Peace perfect and full is what we need ! If you get some or little amount of peace here and then you go away; and if your peace does not stay for long thereafter, then what is the use or value of such incomplete or transitory peace? We need the highest kind of peace which never comes to an end. But the mistake occurs when we get pleased with only petty peace of worldly nature !

One man was going to his village on a camel ride. he reached a mid-way village at the fall of night. There at one place a marriage ceremony was taking place. Drums and trumpets were being beaten and blown. That man was a Brahmin. Having reached the spot he came to know that “Bhūra” was about to be disbursed. “Bhūra”, in Sanskrit, is known as ‘Bhūyasī Dakṣiṇā’, a special gift which is given to Brahmins on wedding occasions. That Brahmin fastened the camel outside the house and went inside to obtain the ‘Bhūra’. The thieves who happened to be there, saw the camel staying, untied it and drove it away. Inside, as a result of the distribution of ‘Bhūra’, Brahmins received four annas each. When the travelling Brahmin came out, he was sad to see the camel missing. What a tragedy! There was on the one hand, the gain of

four annas while, on the other, there was a big loss of five hundred rupees, the cost of camel. The purport of the illustration is that in the petty achievements of transitory worldly things—some honour, some wealth, some pleasures, some status, some rich food—the camel of God-realization is forgotten and lost sight of. Such is the plight ! The great Bliss is foresaken in favour of temporary glitter of worldly pettinesses, and small pleasures ! Eternal happiness is being lost in ephemeral happiness ! People become happy in small doses of honours. One saint was told by some people that he was highly honoured and respected by them. The saint said : “What honour you can confer ! Dust? All of you people can hardly pay any honour. We are honoured by God ! What power have you to honour us?” Truly, indeed, God alone decks His devotees, the saints, with the honour of immortality ! How does a worldly fellow know what the Real Honour is !

The supreme gain which you crave for, is in reality, the deep longing for God-realization. You may call, if you so desire, this longing ‘the urge to know’, ‘the urge to love’, ‘the urge to be happy for ever’, ‘the urge to see God face to face’, ‘the urge for God-realization’. All mean one and the same thing. Only this is our goal. Be firm and fixed on this objective. Do not be pleased with the incomplete. If you do not get stuck up in the half incomplete, you will realize the Full.

This human body is the best of all the living forms. So, its ultimate goal should also be the best. There should

be no higher goal than that ever thinkable. It is thus self-evident that God-realization is the highest and the noblest goal of human life. Human life is meant only for this supreme purpose.

Listener : Where is the guarantee, Holy Sir, that by giving up worldly pleasures, the highest truth of life will be attained? If we give up one and do not gain the other higher one, then shall we not remain empty altogether?

Swāmījī : Arjuna also posed a similar question that if a seeker of Yoga dies midway on the path of Yoga without realizing the Supreme, what plight would be of that poor one? Does he become 'Ubhaya-Bhraṣṭa', or, fall from both the ends (Gītā 6/37-38)? The world was renounced and God was not realized before he left his mortal coil—then will he only hang in between them? The Lord answered : "No, Pārtha ! He suffers no fall : neither in this world nor in the next world; because O dear, he who walks even little on the path of spiritual well-being never slips into any wretchedness or plight 'Durgati' (Gītā 6/40). If you happen to come across any traveller on the noble way of Welfare Supreme, you will yourself realize this truth. His gaiety, his bliss, his God-intoxicatedness will have a peculiar halo, a specifically distinctive ring. The seekers of truth do register spiritual progress and they certainly enjoy extraordinary and ecstatic joy of life whereby they can never give up their search or Sādhana. That which is Supreme Bliss is obtainable by us all, there is no doubt about it. Why is there no doubt? Because when we undertake spiritual practices, the peculiarities of divine life reveal themselves

to us. Let you go in for soulfulness of divine discipline and then, the mysteries will be unfurled unto you too. There is an immense gain or joy in the association of the holy persons (Satsaṅga). We have not seen any other 'Upāya' or the means of realizing the highest goal of life. Countless are the means and people do follow one or the other of them, but the gain we obtain through Satsaṅga, we cannot acquire through any other means which we may adopt even for years.

□ □

Respect Your Understanding

There is one very fine thing. Be kind and pay attention to it. Whosoever has got whatever circumstances, if he regards them as the best and makes the most beneficial use of them, his well-being, 'Kalyāṇa', will take place. The goods or articles which you have are enough, nothing more than that is necessary. There is no necessity of knowing more than the sum of education you have. No more strength is necessary than the strength already with you. Whatever power, intelligence, ability, circumstances etc., you have received, with the proper utilization of that much only God-realization 'will' be possible. This is at once a true and doctrinaire reality.

There is no dearth of knowledge with you, but you do not do the right use of that knowledge, you do not attach importance to it—this is the deficiency. The situation that is before us now, will not remain the same for ever—this knowledge in you is not less or incomplete, it is full to the brim. If you rightly utilize this knowledge, this knowledge will be sufficient for your good or upliftment; it is not an iota less than is necessary; its right use is this that you do not get caught up in the mesh of circumstances, be neither pleased nor displeased with it.

Listener : This knowledge we do have, but as we want so is knowledge not.

Swāmījī : Do you make the proper or right use of the

knowledge that you have? The things which you deem perishable, do you or do you not desire to obtain those things?

Listener : We do have this desire.

Swāmījī : Then, in what way do you regard them as perishable? If you really regarded them as ephemeral, then there would have been no desire in you to have them ! What is the good of getting a thing which is perishable? For example, a wealthy man has wealth; if he does not have wealth, he will not remain wealthy. Likewise, the world is full of perishables only. How will that which is perishable do us any good?

You are not perishable or mortal, but the body is ! The thing that has come as your belonging, is subject to decay, but you yourself are not. The thing was not even before and will not be even after : and it is heading towards destruction every moment. But you were even before and will be even hereafter. Your essential existence is ceaselessly continuous. We were asked a question as to how to know in the present that we will live in the future? Its answer is that you are afraid of doing a bad work and are glad while doing a good work; it is so because of your feeling that it will beget you pain or unhappiness in future if you do evil and happiness if you do good. Obviously, it stands proved that you have recognized your future existence. If you do not regard your future existence, then who will go to heaven, and who to hell? whose will be the rebirth? Who will be free or liberated? After 'Kalyāṇa' i.e., Self-realization who will be full of bliss—you or the world?

By implication, the purport is that you will remain and your body, belongings etc., will not be!

Ponder a little as to how the Indestructible can be made happy by things perishable? The meaning of ‘perishable’ is that it has everything which suffers decay or destruction; nothing else than the perishable is with it.

“am̐tahũ tohim tajaimge pāmara, tū na tajai abahī te”, meaning ‘O, Fool ! these things will all ultimately leave you. Why don’t you give them up right now?’”

Trust not things that are perishable, but do make their best possible use. Do not make them the basis of your future goodness. Please pay a little heed to it : how will that thing, which is not with you at present, do you any good or make you happy when it becomes available to you in future? A thing which is not now, will not be even hereafter, it will be separated from you; how will it render you happy? Whether it will be achieved or not is not known; and even when achieved will it remain for long? For, that which is perishable is bound to perish.

Body etc., are perishable—you do know this, but you do not believe this. In other words, you do not give importance to your understanding or known idea. Had you given credence to your knowledge, you would not have placed your trust on perishable goods, would not have wished or hoped for them, would not have felt happy on gaining or getting them, would not have become unhappy on not getting them, would not have craved for their abidance, would not have cared of their perishability. On non-availability of that very kind of circumstances that we

want, we become unhappy and are pained—such a pain or unhappiness is born of sheer foolishness. There is in it nothing other than foolishness. You want to keep forever the goods or circumstances as they are while knowing that these are subject to constant decay, and become despondent on their destruction; what else is this if not foolishness? If some trouble or pain befalls us, then we begin to think as to how it can be remedied or rooted out. But, if truly viewed, it is already in the process of ending or vanishing. Whether favourable or unfavourable, that situation is not at all abiding. For, what is receivable is separable—Says Vālmīki :

sarve kṣayāntā nicayāḥ patanāntāḥ samucchrayāḥ
saṁyogā viprayogāntā maraṇāntam ca jīvitam.

(Vālmīkīya Rāmāyaṇa 2/105/16)

i.e. All collectables are perishables : worldly things rise only to fall; meetables are all separables, the living must die and fall !!

How can that, which has come to us to ultimately do away, provide abiding happiness to us ? Neither happiness nor unhappiness is ever permanent. Only you are permanent. If the permanent or eternal wants to be happy by the impermanent or ephemeral, is it not his foolishness?

The permanent happiness will be had only by the realization of that God Who is indestructible and ever present. If you repose your contentment anywhere other than in God, i.e.,—in honour, praise, wealth, family, riches etc., you will meet only faithlessness and treachery.

I tell you that which is in your experience. Whether one be a wizard of wisdom or emptied thereof, I tell only that which is a part of their experience. I do not tell of any specific 'Varna', 'Āśrama', caste or community, but I speak of the experience of all human beings. That which meets will certainly be separated—this is the law of life. Now, tell me, whose exclusive experience is this : of the Hindus or of the Muslims, or the Christians? It pertains to whom—to the children, to the young ones of age, or to the elders? Whose experience is this : that of the gents or of the ladies; of the saints and the Sādhus, or of the householders! Whose experience is this? Of all ! Please give attention to it. If you do it, you will be blessed and fortunate ! What does giving attention mean? Only this that you should not be happy or unhappy by lending importance to that thing or situation which is transitory.

Why do you seek the support of a thing that is separable? Even previously you had sought its support and as a result of its not holding true after separation therefrom, you had suffered pain and misery; and, yet, you seek and crave for its support and feel unhappy again and again !! If you are not pleased and displeased by things subject to birth and decay, then you will realize the unborn supreme truth of life. That which has origin and decay, that whose birth and death you know—to desire for it and to feel happy having obtained it 'is' in reality the maze or bondage of life. There is no labyrinth other than this. If you eradicate or root out this maze you will get or see God. That God-realization has no end and separableness. It ever remains

as it is, because it is the Truth (Sat). Truth never ceases to be—‘nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ’ (Gītā 2/16).

You are insulted and you become very unhappy; is your insult abiding or everlasting? You feel happy when honoured; is your honour everlasting? You are ever staying. It is really a matter of wonder that the everlasting Being goes unhappy and happy by the everfleeting things. Lord has in the Bhagavadgītā given out this gospel first of all :

**na tvevāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvaṁ neme janādhīpāḥ,
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayamataḥ param.**

(Gītā 2/12)

i.e., “Neither I, nor thee, nor these kings were here before :

this is not the thing;

Nor will all in future be :

this too is not the thing.

The purport is that the Being is eternal; it was, is and shall be. But the things and circumstances are ever changing. The thing and situation will come and vanish into thin air in course of time. Of what avail is it then to be sad and unhappy by the vanishing away of things and situations of honour? Gladness and sadness, honour and dishonour born of dying things are a chimera, a sheer deception ! Why do you suffer a deception knowing all this? Right from today consciousness should dawn and grow into you that you will not be pleased when honoured and displeased when dishonoured. The reason is that neither the honour nor the dishonour are perpetual. What

difference does it make to 'you' in either case? Achievement of that which is everchanging or decaying is thus as good as no achievement at all. In reality, the perishable is constanly going away from you every moment; its coming or 'Samyoga' in your hand is into the eternal flux of 'Viyoga'. 'Samyoga' is only your hypothesis. Why then incur pleasure or displeasure on this basis ! Is this true or not? Tell.

Listener : This is absolutely true, Holy Sir !

Swāmījī : If this is wholly true, then why cause any delay? Accept this truth as an article of faith right from today; nay, from this very moment ! It permits of no future, not even of a minute or two ! If you do not get pleased or displeased by the perishable, you will attain the Imperishable. If you do not, you may twist my ears !



True Shelter

It is human nature to seek shelter of one or the other. Every living being wants to get the shelter of someone, wants to make someone his support. Why is there this sort of nature? It is so because the being is the (inseparable) fraction of the Supreme Lord. If he seeks the support and shelter of the Lord, then he will have no need of any other shelter. But till he gains the resort of the Supreme Self, he goes on seeking shelters one after the other. He should take God's shelter, but instead he seeks the shelter of some other thing or being. He seeks the shelter of wealth, of family, of education, of abilities, of strength, but this shelter does not stay.

Only God's shelter should be sought—this idea seems to be right in mind and understanding, but we do not give up other shelters! Though you are not unfree in giving up other shelters, you are free, yet by taking special support and shelter of others, by gaining some consolation and pleasures therefrom, an illusion has arisen in the heart that how without this support or how by giving up this shelter you will be in a position to live at all ! How will I really exist? Owing to surging up of this kind of emotion a sort of cowardice has taken roots in the mind that it is not possible to give up their shelter !

Whose support is there when we are under the spell of deep sleep? No one else's shelter is there, not even of

God's ! In that state there is a sort of semi-unconsciousness, a kind of swoon; in that state the shelter of world is automatically given up, but that of ignorance (Mūḍhatā) persists. Thus it is a sheer illusion that we cannot live without someone's shelter. Or, else, tell me on whose support do you exist or live during deep sleep? In deep sleep you do exist even without or in absence of world's shelter or support ! Please be kind and do pay attention to this one point of great importance. We do not get that much of happiness or pleasure on strength of world's shelter as we get without it during deep sleep. The happiness that we get by giving up world's shelter or support, the freshness that then shoots up, the energy to work that is accumulated—all that does not come up while we are dependent on world's support. What to talk of conservation of energy, it is spent up instead ! you become anxiety-ridden, tired and restless by seeking the shelter of wealth, family, intellect, ability, youth etc., and your power is downed, it decays; then, giving up all, you go to sleep. During sleep, power and energy effortlessly surge up in you again. Thus by sundering of worldly shelters a distinctive and refreshing power will grow in you. And, mind you, boundless will be the strength of gaining the shelter of the great God; so much so—without limit of measure—that no fear or anxiety will ever haunt or trouble you ! Only for this it is thus said : 'yaṁ labdhvā cāparam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ.' (Gītā 6/22)—Higher than this there has been no real or great gain at all. There is no higher gain than this, nor can, nor shall it ever be ! But this will occur only on giving up all the ephemeral or perishable shelters of the world.

The mistake which is often committed is that the shelters which are believed and known to you as the perishable ones, are not at all given up. You do repeat and recite the Name of God, you do meditate, sing God's glory and think on matters spiritual—and yet you simultaneously keep trust in the support and shelter of the perishable things of the world ! Without totally relinquishing the shelter of the destructible world, God's shelter in toto is not obtained. Without seeking total support (of God), the whole power cannot be secured.

There is no dearth or paucity from God's side. To the extent you seek God's shelter, to that very extent you will get consolation, power and gain. You will undoubtedly get illimitable power or strength if by totally giving up world's shelter you depend for everything on God alone.

Where is that God? May I tell you in this regard one thing that He is in all beings' heart—'sarvasya cāhaṁ hr̥di samniviṣṭaḥ' (Gītā 15/15); 'īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ hr̥ddeśerjuna tiṣṭhati' (Gītā 18/61). He is the Indwelling Spirit of all the beings; but the difficulty is that the being looks only outward, he does not look deep within. You regard yourself that 'I am'. Of that 'I-ness' Ātman is the support; and God, the Supreme Self, is the shelter even of the Ātman—mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke (Gītā 15/7). Your Ātman is an inseparable fraction of the Paramātman. You (Amśa) are in one 'Kṣetra' i.e., body, and your 'Amśī' (God) is in all the bodies (Kṣetras)—'kṣetrajñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi sarvakṣetreṣu bhārata' (Gītā 13/2). The Gopīs have said:

‘na khalu gopikānandano bhavānakhiladehinā-mantarātmadr̥k’ i.e., ‘You are not mere the child of Yaśodā, You are the witness to the Inner Self of all the beings of all the bodies in living and inert forms, whether they be gods, demons, ghosts, or spirits, or be they the residents of hells or heavens, devotees or meditative and contemplative seeker of Truth or God-loving fellows. But how are you here when you are all these?

(Bhāgavata 10/31/4)

‘Vikhanasārthito’—‘You appeared when Brahmājī prayed unto You’. Why did he pray? ‘Viśvaguptaye’ i.e., for the protection of the universe. For, Thou alone are the Saviour of Creation, none else has this power to protect. Besides, You have ‘appeared’—not born—in the Yādava clan ‘udeyivān sātvatām kule’. When the sun rises, nobody says that the sun is born, because the sun is present even before it appears to rise in the eastern skies ! Likewise God descends in divine ways, He is not born like our bodies, the natural beings.

Mind, intellect, senses, body, individuals, goods, materials, money, wealth etc.,—none belongs to you, nothing lives with you; every moment it is going away from you and, yet, you seek their shelter ! These mind, intellect etc., are dependent on you, but you make them your support. These who seek your shelter, you take resort to them for your life ! How an ironical error ! You want shelter of wealth which is the product of your industry and labour. Herein does lie your mistake. Relinquishing the shelter of such things, please seek the shelter of God alone—‘māmekam

śaraṇam vraja' (Gītā 18/66). 'tameva śaraṇam gaccha sarvabhāvena bhārata, tatprasādātparam śāntim sthānam prāpsyasi śāśvatam' (Gītā 18/62).

Seek the shelter in all your moods and emotions of that God Who dwells in all the hearts. By His grace you will get supreme peace (total unconcern from worldliness) and eternal or indestructible establishment in your own Supreme Self. We are all free in seeking the shelter of God, none is unfree. None is even unable to get His shelter and support.

This very moment you 'can' seek the shelter and support of God, because you 'are' with Him and He 'is' with you. Neither He can ever be separated from you nor can you be ever alienated from Him. If He gets away from you, then there will be two Gods : one He, and the other one you. His indivisibility, omnipresence and supremacy will be disintegrated. He will have no importance after His having broken away from you ! He cannot, therefore, be separated from you. Nor can you be separated from Him. Yes, you can regard yourself separate from Him, but you cannot be separated from each other. Similarly, you can certainly regard yourself dependent on the world and seek shelter of worldly goods and materials, but cannot be dependent upon them for all time. You took the shelter of wealth, family, friends, intelligence, ability, power etc., but could you and can you really be dependent on them permanently? You know it, believe it and, yet, you seek their shelter. What an illusion ! What an error ! It is so because such supports are as vanishable as the world itself

is. They are not of stable or staying nature. Therefore, turn your back upon them all and seek only God's shelter. Make use of wealth in the best possible manner. Do all work but trust only in the ever-abiding shelter of Almighty and Eternal God. The Saints have said :

**pativratā rahe pati ke pāsā,
yom sāhiba ke dhiga rahe dāsā.**

i.e., "With husband the faithful wife does live; with God the serving devotee does live."

As a wife of fidelity lives by and for her husband only, so also beings full of devotion seek and live under God's support and shelter only. Jagajjananī Jānakī used to pay respects to her parents-in-law much more than her regards for her own mother and father; but when her Lord Bhagavān Śrī Rāma left for the forests, she gave up even them. King Śrī Daśaratha had told that if Janakadulārī stayed at Ayodhyā, his life would be saved; and yet she chose to live for and with Śrī Bhagavān only. She could not think of staying or living without Śrī Rāma. How could moonshine be there in absence of moon. There can be no daylight without the sun ! How can the bodily-shadow live without the body ? So also, no Jīva can at all live without or separate from God. But, since he seeks the shelter of the world, alienable from God, he becomes time and again miserable. If he seeks the support of inseparable God, then he will undoubtedly be happy and gay. Please decide just now, and once for all, that you will not seek world's shelter; you do earn wealth, do all worldly work you can but do not make wealth and world your life's resort or shelter.

So far you have taken much from the world, so you work for the world to repay your debt to it, not to seek its shelter now. As a matter of fact, world is not worthy of being a shelter, for it is constantly changing and is not stable even for a moment. It is changing so fast that the same world cannot be seen twice. That's why it is called 'Saṁsāra'—'saṁ sarati iti saṁsārah'. As God is Mercy Incarnate—'prabhu mūrati kṛpāmayī hai' (Vinaya-Patrikā 170/7), so is this world change incarnate. There is nothing more in it except change. You have wrongly regarded world as worthy of your shelter. You should now turn your face away from it and hook your heart at the feet of God and have them as your shelter; and just now, Yes, just now !

'mere to giradhara gopāla dūṣaro na koī'; 'eka bāni karunānidhāna kī, so priya jāke gati na āna kī'. Seek no other shelter. With all moods and emotions surrender at God's altar—'tameva śaraṇaṁ gaccha sarvabhāvena' (Gītā 18/62), 'sa sarvavid bhajati mām sarvabhāvena' (Gītā 15/19), 'sarvabhāva bhaja kapaṭa taji mohi paramapriya soi' (Mānasa 7/87). Verily, indeed, your kinship with God is self-evident and profound. Yoke yourself not with the changing world—this is the whole thing, the only thing.



Be Careful

If you be careful now and cautious, no time can ever go waste. If time is wasted in mere talking useless things, in idling and indolence, in joking and merry-making, in smoking bidies and cigarettes, then it is extremely painful affair. It will have a very dangerous result. This time we have got for God-realization. To inflict pain or cause trouble to anyone for your selfishness and ego is to create a typhoon of future troubles for yourself. Therefore, be cautious! Utilize each and every moment in the best possible work.

You can keep your money locked up in your chest, but you cannot keep the time that way. It is beneficial to employ time in acts of goodness, otherwise it will be wasted. It is fleeting. Time is a very big asset. It is not like wealth but much more important and valuable than that. You will die despite your ownership of millions and billions of rupees, but the hour of death is fixed, not one second before that you can expire. Your living is in the control of time. You will not live when your time is over. Wealth cannot extend your life-span, it is the time which does it. Time is the base of your life. Rupees are spent up when you spend them, but the time is all the time being spent of its own accord; and ceaselessly. It is going or spending itself while we are sleeping, eating, sitting, working, worshipping or singing hymns of devotion! This

expenditure is perennial. Death is approaching near; it brooks no aberration; not of even a moment! You may conduct your business or domestic work, may do your 'Bhajana', may enter into 'Samādhi', time is fleeting fast. The moment time is over, you will have to put off your ghost. Then there is no power with which we may continue to live. Thus the main basis or pillar of our life is going. Make thus the best use of time. There is no remedy thereof other than being cautious or careful ! Thus be careful in each incoming and outgoing breath. Saints have averred :

dila mem jāgrata rahiyai bamdā

heta prīta harijana sum kariyai, parahariyai dukhadvamdā.

i.e., keep wide awake in the heart, O, devotee ! Make thy love and affection with the devotees of Lord and free thyself from pain-cum-duality.

What are we doing? Who will have to suffer its result? Let us think deep on the point ! Such a thought, such a caution only a human being can maintain. Its awareness is not there in animals and birds, in plants and trees. Even the demi-gods in their enjoyments of life have no knowledge about it. Man alone has the ability to do good to others having renounced his ego. If he does not do good to others, does no service to others, he is committing a very big error. Man has no opportunity to remember God and serve others at any other place (than this human birth). Do not miss this chance, please ! If you happen to do this work, you have accomplished a very big thing. They, who use their time meaningfully, do not have to repent; but they, who waste their time have to. Says Gosvāmījī :

so paratra dukha pāvai sira dhuni dhuni pachitāi,
kālāhi karmahi īśvarahi mithyā doṣa lagāi.

(Mānasa 7/43)

i.e., Thus they repent and seethe in pain shaking their head again and again ! And accuse time, actions and God wrongly for their crisis, sorrow and pain !!

He who wastes his time is causing a great loss unto his own self. The time meant for meditation on the Lord, he utilizes for sense-enjoyments (Bhoga); and the time meant for the good service, and welfare of others, is employed for other persons' disadvantage, evil or ill-fare—this is a thing of very big loss. Save yourself from this loss and be cautious. Even an animal becomes alert, if it is alarmed. The camel does not go stiff in ego if you tell it 'be careful, be careful'; it does not get annoyed. If you caution the donkey 'Save thee, Save !' it begins to walk correctly. It is becoming of Man to be cautious and careful of his own !

udīrito'rtha	paśunāpi	gr̥hyate
hayāśca	nāgāśca	vahanti
anuktamapyūhati	paṇḍito	janah
pareṅgitajñānaphalā	hi	buddhayaḥ.

(Even the animals understand the import of things hinted,
Elephants and horses too carry their rider when alerted.

Men of wisdom infer through suggestions the purport
of words untold,

For, their intelligence knows other ones' inner emotion untold!!)

In man there is the ability to be careful by himself. But he is not utilizing this ability, he is wasting his time like birds and animals. On one side he is witnessing the T.V., enjoying the fun and on the other, Death is approaching near, Yamarāja is coming ! The time we have presently got, is not for wasting. It is to be employed in the noblest of deeds : serving others and remembering God—these two are work of fundamental importance. You can take service from animals and trees, but they cannot themselves serve you. The mentality and ability of serving others is there only in the humans, in none else. Likewise, to remember God, to love Him, and the idea that I belong to God and God is mine—such emotions are possible only in the human mind. Therefore, man should always be careful and cautious ! We should write “Sāvadhāna” (Be cautious!) in bold letters and then hang the placard on the walls so that we are drawn towards it in our attention time and again and we remain always careful.

Time is fleeting fast and man will have to die the moment his time is spent up. Why do people die? Because time to live is no more in their balance. How very intelligent may be, whatever power of strength you might possess, you may own riches beyond measures, you may be a king of a big empire, you might have everything of the world, but all that is of no use at the hour of your death :

araba kharaba laũ dravya hai, udaya asta laũ rāja,
tulasī jo nija marana hai, to āvahi kihi kāja.

i.e., Millions and trillions of wealth you have,

And a king of mighty empire thou be !

Tulasī, when hour of thy death comes,

Of what avail shall all it be !!

Therefore, be alert and cautious. The most simple and easy way is to begin chanting the Name of God—‘Rāma, Rāma’, and to beseech God in the innermost recesses of the heart by telling : ‘O, Lord ! Bless me with such kindness that I forget you not !’ Remembrance of God is the destroyer of the entire world of difficulties—‘harismṛtiḥ sarvavipadvimokṣaṇam (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 8/10/55). This is a thing of very straight, simple and extremely great value or importance. The only necessity is of being careful that no time is wasted or emptied of God’s remembrance. If even the fraction of time taken in uttering only one name of God is gone blank, then too it is a thing of great loss.

Listener : The Name ‘Rāma, Rāma’ is to be chanted from within the silentful depth of our heart or it is to be uttered aloud with tongue.

Swāmījī : You may chant it from within or even with tongue. Any way, you do it; the chanting of Name should not cease : ‘tasmāt kenāpyupāyena manaḥ kṛṣṇe niveśayet’ (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 7/1/31). By all or any means your mind and speech should remain lodged in God. One need not wait for an auspicious hour (Muhūrta), or some special

occasion for it. In gaining human body, the auspicious hour is already gained.

**soī tittha sutittha hai, soī bāra subāra,
bhadra bhāgī mānavā, sumaracā sirajāṇahāra.**

Listener : Which of the two, Swāmījī, is more necessary; chanting the Name of the Lord or doing the work of God?

Swāmījī : This question is as good as this question—Please tell us, what to do, whether we should eat bread or drink water? Both are necessary. Chant the name of God and undertake the activities of domestic life and business life also. Name can be chanted with each breath everytime, but work cannot be continuously done for all time. Therefore, recite the Name of God every moment, but do the work too as per occasions demand—‘tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu māmanusmara yudhya ca’ (Gītā 8/7). If any work congruent with scriptural injunctions, is occasioned, then regard it as God’s work and do it. Recite God’s name ceaselessly round-the-clock; let not you miss the name :

**cahū juga cahū śruti nāma prabhāu,
kali biseṣi nahim āna upāu.**

(Mānasa 1/22/4)

i.e., ‘In all the ages and in four Great Vedas has been the impress of the Name of God ! In the Age of Kali, more especially so. Way out lies nowhere other, than in the name of Lord !!

In the four ages (of Satayuga, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kaliyuga) and in all the four Vedas there is the deepseated influence of the Name; but in this Machine Age (Kaliyuga) its effect is very extraordinary and special. There is no remedy other than this of similar importance. All the saints have sung the glory of Name with one voice. There can be a difference in relation to Name. Someone will recite 'Om', 'Rāma', Others 'Hare Rāma', still others 'Om Namō Nārāyaṇāya'. Thus there can be difference in the Name, but in the chanting of Name (Nāma-Japa) all are one.

Listener : Will the Prārabdha be cancelled by doing 'Rāma-Rāma' ?

Swāmījī : 'Prārabdha' (reward of the actions of previous births) will naturally end by suffering or enjoying it. Why be anxious about 'Prārabdha'. The moment you suffer it, it goes off, it disappears of its own accord. It is being automatically cut asunder every moment.

Listener : What is the use of, then, of doing 'Rāma-Rāma', when mind or attention is not centered on it ?

Swāmījī : Even when recitation of Nāma is superficial it does some good. No activity is meaningless. Utter any word, and that will not go waste, and, then, the name of God is, what God is, It never gets meaningless. The thing does not end here. The recitation of Name is of very great service and value to the three worlds. The reason is that the 'Śabda' i.e., word soon spreads everywhere and gains omnipresence. Because of its this very character of being universally widespread, it manifests itself through the radio.

If anybody utters evil words, then he does big crime against the three worlds. If anybody mentally harbours ill of anybody, then, too, he does wrong to the three worlds. If, for example, you throw a pebble in the waters of the pond, it will create circular wavelets with certain radiations which remain invisible because of their being too subtle for the eye. In similar way, even a small word is spoken, that too spreads all over the three worlds. Unthinkable is the power of the word—

“śabdaśakteracintyatvāt”

Thus even when anybody utters the name of ‘Lord’ indifferently, he will certainly be benefited thereby. What to say of that Name which is recited with affection and attention !

Silence, As a Spiritual Practice

I usually point out a spiritual practice—‘Be Silent’. Harbour an idea from within that I have to do nothing. Neither selfishness nor selflessness, neither worldly nor other worldly i.e., nothing has to be done. Having thus thought, please sit down. The finest hour is the morning after getting out of bed. Immediately after waking from sleep, bow down to God and sit down. As there was no resolve (Saṅkalpa) of doing anything in the state of deep sleep, so also there should not remain any resolve to do anything in the state of waking life. This is deep sleep in waking state. Thinking, repetition in the name of God (Japa), meditation etc., nothing is to be done. So much so that ‘no thinking etc., is to be done’, even this resolve is not to be entertained because the resolve of doing nothing is also an act of ‘doing’.

Now nothing at all is to be done—think like this and sit silently. If the mind does not accept this then having conceded that “God is perfect, one and all in all”, sit in silence. If you are a devotee of Personate God (Saguṇa), then having mentally accepted that “I am at the feet of the Lord”, keep quiet and sit down. But this consideration is of secondary importance. The thing of foremost and fundamental importance, however, is that there is nothing at all to be done. If owing to any fickleness of resolve anything crops up in your memory, then ignore it and

remain unconcerned, do not fight against it. Neither get pleased nor displeased about it. If, there are any noble resolves in consonance with scriptures, do not be pleased with them; and if there are evil resolves contrary to the scriptural injunctions, do not get displeased with them.

You say that mind is extremely bad, but in reality mind is neither good nor bad. Badness and goodness are the attributes of man himself. When one himself is good, the resolves are good. When one himself is bad, his resolves are bad. Good and bad—both these are there as a result of their relationship with nature. In want of kinship with nature, there is neither goodness nor badness. As pleasure and pain are two things, there are no such two things in Bliss (*Ānanda*), i.e., in Bliss there is neither pleasure nor pain. In the same way, there is neither good nor bad in the Real (*Tattva*) divorced of any relationship with nature. Therefore be not pleased or annoyed after differentiating the good from the bad.

Resolve may appear and disappear but think at the very outset that the resolve does not, in reality come, it only goes. Whatever acts we did in the past, their memory flashes forth on the mental plane; or whatever programme or activity in the future we thought of, memory thereof sprouts up that there I have to go, I have to accomplish that work etc. Thus things of past and future come to memory which have no existence in the present hour. We do not think of the past and the future, but its memory haunts. The fact is that the memory thereof is not coming, but going. Whatever things are stored up in the mind, they

are organising their exit obviously; thus you should not tie your relation with them, be unconcerned and neutral. You will not be tarnished if you do not bind yourself in relationship with it.

There are many meritorious deeds (Punya Karma) in the world, but do we really earn holy merit by them? Likewise there are several 'Sinful' deeds in the world, but are we tarnished by them? No, not in the least. Why? Because we have no relation with them. We have no hands in them. As sins and merits are taking place, so also resolves and their opposites are taking place in the mind. We are not committing them, nor even we want to do them, nor do we have any resolve of their doing. We have never got to do anything. We get attached or stuck up with them then they acquire the epithet of merit and sin, good and evil whereby they produce their corresponding results and we have to bear them. Therefore, do not get stuck up with them; neither support them, nor oppose them. If resolves or their contrary resolves arise, let them arise. This has to be done and this has not to be done—give up both these tendencies.

“naiva tasya kṛtenārtho nākṛteneha kaścana” (Gītā 3/18) i.e., hold fast neither in doing something nor in not doing something. Both these assertive notes should be given up. For, the assertion of doing something is also a resolution, and that of not doing is also a resolution. Therefore be unconcerned with both the resolves of doing and not doing and be silent; then the kinship with nature is sundered, because nature is in the form of activity. This

activity may be inside the mind or outside the mind. It, in its entirety, belongs to nature. Thus if you stay silent both internally and externally, then that what is called the knowledge of the 'Real' (Tattvajñāna), liberation while alive (Jīvanmukti), or effortless atonement (Sahaja Samādhi) will take place.

**uttamā sahajāvasthā madhyamā dhyānadhāraṇā,
kaniṣṭhā śāstracintā ca tīrthayātrā'dhamā'dhamā.**

i.e., pilgrimage is smaller than the smallest spiritual Sādhana. Higher than that is contemplation on the meaning of scriptures. Higher than the meditation on scriptures is Dhyānadhāraṇā i.e., holding fast to faith in the Almighty and His omnipresence and meditation on Him. The highest is effortless atonement with the Supreme, the High and the Holy. You will reach and have lodgment in that effortless unison yourself. Its glory is great and beyond words. The glory (Māhātmya) of 'not-doing' can never be equalled by that of 'doing'; it never was, it shall never be. The power which lies in not doing is not at all there in doing. The reason is that any doing has a beginning and an end. That which has a beginning has an end, that is not eternal. But the 'Not-doing' has neither a beginning nor an end; hence that is eternal.

In reality, silent, one does not become, silence is natural to him. They who have schooling in Vedantic values, will know and appreciate that the self is neither the doer, nor the enjoyer. Thus is 'Sahajāvasthā' natural. Doing is ephemeral or transitory, but not doing is eternal and absolute—

**daḍa sake to daḍa le, jaba lagi terī daḍa,
daḍa thakyā dhokhā miṭyā, vastu ṭhaḍa-kī-ṭhaḍa.**

i.e., 'Run if you can run, till you have your run. Tired of run and freed from deception, God is there without the run.

This atonement is neither the waking, nor dreaming, nor even deep sleeping. The distinction between deep-sleep and effortless atonement is this; there is unconsciousness in a state of deep-sleep but in 'Sahajāvasthā' there is no unconsciousness, instead there is awareness, conscious awakenedness, a kindled light of the knowledge supreme—'ātmasaṁyama yogāgnau juhvati jñānadīpīte' (Gītā 4/27).

If you get asleep while entering silence, begin doing 'Japa and Kīrtana', recitation and singing of the God's name and stand up. But till sleep comes not, remain in 'not-doing', in silence. If you can be thus silent and quiet even for a few seconds then too it is a great gain. If silence be there for half a minute, it generates huge power. The power which is generated during silence is never produced in 'doing'. In 'doing' power is consumed. While doing work you get tired and then get into sleep. In deep-sleep all the exhaustion is removed and freshness springs up in the mind, body and senses; energy to do work is recoupled. So also during the time of deluge (Pralaya) when silence is established, then the power of creation comes up. In great-deluge (Mahāpralaya) when silence has its sway, then the power of great creation surges up. Thus the whole power as it is, that all-to-one comes from the depths of 'not-doing'. Not-doing is the nature of the Lord, from Whom all powers emerge.

Without thinking thus for a few days, the technique of being silent is not gained. If you think for a few days, then alone you will grasp it. Presently even if you do not understand it, you may please accept that 'such is the state of effortless atonement'. The description of such 'Sahajāvasthā', is very rarely visible even in the poetry and utterances of the Saints. There has been at 'Sīnthala' Śrī Harirāmadāsajī Mahārāja, a great saint. In his hymns of the Lord's praise there comes such a description :

sahajāṁ māraga sahaja kā
 sahaja kiyā viśrāma,
 'hariyā' jīva ra sīva kā
 eka nāma aru ṭhāma
 sahaja tana mana sahaja pūjā,
 sahaja sā deva nahīm aura dūjā.

He has given his autobiographical introduction in this very vein :

hariyā jaimaladāsa guru, rāma niramjana deva,
 kāyā devala deharo, sahaja hamāre seva.

i.e., Effortless is the path of unison,

In unison do I rest.

Of self within (Jīva) and self all over (Śiva),

Oh ! Hariyā one is the name and residence best.

Effortless is the body and mind,

So is the worship or the prayer.

Other than effortlessness,
 No God can ever be there.
 Oh, Hariyā, Jaimaladāsa is the Guru,
 and Rāma Niramjana God,
 Temple of God is his body,
 and 'not-doing' worship of God.

In the poetry of saint Kabīra, there is a reference—"sādhō sahaja samādhi bhalī". There is a very scanty description of 'Sahajāvasthā' in the poetry of other saints; only a glimpse is there. Of the achievement of such a state of easy unison of spirit, the crowning means is 'to be silent' within and without i.e., not doing anything. Everything happens by not doing anything. The ultimate of all the spiritual practices is—'Not doing anything'. All practices flock, peep in and fill in 'not-doing' anything. This is called effortless atonement with Supreme self—'Sahaja Samādhi'. The saints have given it another name also "Silent Satsaṅga".

Listener : Are not we 'then' to be an observing witness to our mind and its activities?

Swāmījī : No, Not in the least. We will observe our mind only when we regard that we are connected with the mind; the truth is that we have no kinship with the mind. Thus there is no 'seeing' towards the mind. Not observing the mind is not at all an ordinary thing, it is a thing of very high value. As a pice is also a fraction of millions or trillions of rupees, so also this 'not-doing' is of "Jīvanmukti" or 'God-realization'.

Listener : Can we practise silence in any of the spiritual Sāadhanās?

Swāmījī : Yes, it can be done in any of the practices. A Hindu, a Muslim, a Christian, a Jain, a Parasi, or for that matter a person of any denomination can practise it. I had earlier placed before you two observations. One pertained to the 'Path of Wisdom' that God is perfect and fills the universe fully; is ever present in the form of 'Is'. Hold fast to this resolve. The second observation pertained to the 'Path of Devotion', it demands total surrender or heartily lying down at the feet of the Lord. These are the two main pathways :

**bhagatihi gyānahi nahim kachu bhedā,
ubhaya harahim bhava sambhava khedā.**

(Mānasa 7/115/7)

No distinction exists between Gnosis and Devotion,

Both uproot the pains of birth and death.

We have to do nothing—even earlier nothing was to be done nor is now to be done, nor even hereafter. Not even contemplation on the Lord is to be done, we have to fall at the feet of God, but have not to meditate on His feet. We have to think neither of the world nor of God. If meditative thought comes of its own accord, then think that your meditation is vanishing, not coming. This is the ultimate practiceless practice.

All Can Realize God

There is one such thing whose glory I cannot encase in words. If you pay heed to it, you will be blessed and fortunate forever. That is this : there is not a single spiritual discipline or practice about which we can say that this we cannot follow; and there is no such worldly work which all can do and accomplish. Reason being that the ability and power to realize God is inherent in all men; but the ability and power to gain worldly object is not in all men. For example, there are two things : fulfilment of desire and foresaking of desire. No one can ever accomplish the fulfilment of desire. We may become an Indra, an emperor, a Mahārāja, or a rich man, or we may amass any amount of wealth, then too the fulfilment of desire can never be a reality. But renunciation of desire one certainly can. None can ever satiate worldliness; and God-realization all can have. No one is unable in this act. Because, human birth is meant only for it. What work will he be able to do if he cannot fulfil the work of God-realization for which alone human life has been bestowed? Human body is not gotten for satisfaction of worldly desires, then how can he succeed in doing this work? He can never.

One to all are free to realize God and renounce worldly desires; one to all are unfree in the fulfilment of worldly desires. Who is there in this assembly, please say, who

is capable enough to satisfy all his worldly desires? Never is anyone able to do so. But in God-realization and desire-renunciation all are capable, none is incapable; all are eligible, none ineligible; all are able, none not able. No two persons ever have the same sort of achievement in worldly life, but God-realization is the same with one and all. The nature of the realization of God, the Real, which was envisioned or experienced by the sages like Nārada, Vyāsa, Sukadeva etc., in ancient times, can even today be gained by any man, if he so desires. All are rightfully eligible to God-realization—whether he be Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra; whether Brahmachārī, Gṛhastha, Vānaprastha or Samnyāsī; whether sick or healthy, illiterate or educated, poor or rich, you may immensely doubt its veracity, but doubt will not hold true. None is free in gaining the worldly objects or goods; because their realization is under the control of others. Without acknowledging the suzerainty of others, without seeking the support or aid of others, not a single one can enjoy the objects of worldly enjoyments. But any lone man can have the realization of God, because in God-realization there is no necessity at all of anybody's help. One-to-all are free in God-realization.

They who show the spiritual path are also everytime free. Dattātreya Mahārāja had twenty-four 'Gurus'; they were all spiritual masters otherwise why should he accept them as his Gurus ! Guru is omnipresent. There is no dearth of Guru!

There is a desire for toys in the childhood, but do you

have that desire now? Obviously it is proved that desire does wither or wane. This is a thing of your experience. No worldly desire endures. When one declines, you catch up another desire. Thus you get at new desires everytime. If you give up entertaining desires, you will be exceedingly happy and fortunate. The desire to realize God never dies, it only becomes dormant. You catch up desires which endure not, and pay no attention towards that desire which dies not—such is our real state ! You are all strong enough in God-realization, not weak; but you are all weak in fulfilling worldly desires, none is too strong !

Listener : Desire for world and desire for God—Do these both, even when self-contradictory, dwell in one and the same place?

Swāmījī : Both the desires grow at the same place. Where there is the desire for 'Bhoga' or sense-enjoyments there is the desire for 'Mokṣa' or spiritual liberation. Desire for 'Bhoga' will diminish and the desire for God will be awakened. If you do away with worldly desire, your desire for God-realization will be automatically fulfilled. Worldly desire will never be fully satisfied. Million, billion and trillion births may come and go and yet the worldly desire will not be fulfilled, they will be ever newly born—'jimi pratilābha lobha adhikāi' i.e., with every gain the greed grows more and more.

Listener : How do both the contradictory desires live in one single place?

Swāmījī : You have caught hold of one desire

and the other one is inherent in your nature. You have caught hold of the worldly desire and the desire for God is essentially in you yourself. I should always live, there should be no ignorance in me, I should ever be happy—this is your own desire. The desire for ‘Bhogas’ or sense-enjoyments is not essentially yours !

You are yourself the motivating-force of your desires. If you yourself give up the worldly desire, it will not stay anymore ! That whose fulfilment is impossible deserves to be given up. Worldly desire cannot be fulfilled for the reason that ‘World’ ‘is not’, while the desire for God is fulfilled because God ‘is’. Worldly goods are ephemeral, i.e., they live not for ever but God is always present, Eternal.

Listener : How can we be away from worldly desire while living in the world ?

Swāmījī : Can there be desire of all kinds while living in the world? It cannot be. How can there be all sorts of artificial desires? Even in the matter of food, two persons do not have the same desire. Someone may like sweets while the other one might go in for spicy things or chillies. Someone may like less chillies and someone more. Thus it is that all people do not have all desires of the world. Therefore, mortal is the desire for world. As you live away from other desires of the world, in that very way, you can be away from those desires also which you have entertained.

In reality, you do not live in the world; ‘you’ live in God; *mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke* (Gītā 15/7). In the world only the body, senses, mind and intellect live : ‘*manah*

ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛtisthāni' (Gītā 15/7). The things which are not yours such as body etc., you regard them as yours and that one, the Paramātmā, God, you do not regard as yours—this is the fundamental mistake.

Listener : How can we regard God as ours without seeing Him?

Swāmījī : Are you yourself seen by you? You tell that the body is yours and so are the senses, mind and intellect. By implication, then, you are separate from all of them—body etc. Thus, what are you? What is your colour or form? Tell me. You do not see yourself and yet you believe that you are. Don't you? Please do pay attention to the talk that is going on. The desire that cannot be fulfilled, please give that up; and work on that desire which can be fulfilled. Essence is only this much. This is self-evident, perfect doctrinaire axiom.

'yaṁ labdhvā cāparam lābhaṁ manyate nādhikaṁ tataḥ' (Gītā 6/22) i.e., 'there is no higher or more valuable gain than the realization whereof and near which no sorrow or unhappiness can reach, that can be achieved and realized by all; but that will be possible only when you do not hold fast to the worldly desire. If there is desire for worldly objects simultaneous with the desire for God-realization, then the desideratum will not be accomplished—'duvidhā meṁ dono gaye, māyā milī na rāma' i.e., in a state of double-mindedness, there occurs neither the material nor the spiritual gain.

Listener : God creates the worldly desires !

Swāmījī : God never creates any desire of any being or thing, never ! Desire is your own personal creation. If you heartily pray, then God will certainly put an end to all your desires. God does not do anything which can put you in crisis; because you are part of His essence. How can then the ‘Aṁśī’—the Whole—do any harm to His own inalienable essential part, the ‘Aṁśa’?

□ □

Benefit from firm Resolve

Listener : Till the objects of enjoyment do not appear before us, our mind remains firm that we shall not succumb to them, but we become weak when enjoyments confront us ! What should we do?

Swāmījī : Very fine question ! The idea of not succumbing to sense-enjoyments—Bhoga—is verily a rare thing, indeed ! It's an extremely valuable idea. Sundering the ties of the world and awakening our relationship with God—this is manliness (Manuṣyatā). If we view things truly, then our relation with the world is unbracketable and our relation with God is unbreakable. This is an impossibility that our ties with the world are cemented and those with God sundered. We do not have the power to break away from God; nor is God so powerful, despite His omnipotence, to break away from us. The truth is that we have no kinship with the world whereas our relationship with God is eternal. Break that which 'is not' and awaken that which 'is', this is our main work.

Till the objects do not come to our gaze, our mind remains firm that we will not be entangled in the 'Bhogas'—even if this much is appreciated by us in toto, then too it is a matter of great joy. It is really a thing of a very high quality not to have desire for sense-enjoyments. It is not at all an ordinary thing. If there be even a little inclination to give up the world and gain God, its fruit will not be ephemeral, but eternal (i.e., Kalyāṇa or oneness with God)—

“svalpamapyasya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt” (Gītā 2/40).

Even the gain of millions, billions and trillions of rupees is nothing in comparison to it. Even the gain of ‘the Kingdom of the Three Worlds’ does not value more than a hair, for, every bit of it is perishable.

On appearance of objects before us, we go infirm and get enticed, why such is our state? Because we think of our frailty but give up this idea. Such is our bad habit. Having heard in ‘Satsaṅga’ (Holy company) and read in books we do think to amend and improve upon us, but we forget and give it up thereafter. We catch hold of and give up even common things. This very habit tends to weaken us. Had you such a habit as to renounce a thing forever what you give up once, or hold fast to a thing what you harbour and accept once, then certainly you would not have been in this miserable plight ! Pardon me, do not take it amiss; but this is a plight indeed ! We do not remain stable on the ideas we initially think about. There is not as much vice in goods or in acquisitions as it is in our evil habit. Till there is no firmness or gritty determination in you, you will not progress in any field of your life. Very big loss is happening by spoilation of habit. You will be blessed if you cultivate the habit of remaining firm on the point. God is mine, come what may, God alone is mine. The world is never mine, so it is not mine forever.

‘Truth is to be spoken’, make this idea firm that from

today onwards only truth is to be spoken, not a lie. Even in this matter be unbudging and unshakably firm on “we will not tell a lie”; and not on “we will speak the truth”. Renunciation is of great glory and big importance. Whatever may happen “We shall not tell a lie” ! Prestige might dwindle, honour in society may sink low, riches may flee, losses to any extent may befall our lot but “We shall not utter any falsehood”. If you become weak at the moment when there is an opportunity to speak the truth, and you lose all boldness and courage to speak the truth, then you may relax only this much that you may not tell a lie, and even keep mum. You may tell the person before you that all things are not supposed to be told to all, hence we won’t tell. We do not have guts to utter truthful things, do not have even the thought of bringing out the truth on tongue, do not have the mind to divulge the complete truth. Get up then in such cases, leave the place and go away telling : ‘We have some work to do’. The only work is that we do not want to divulge. ‘We shall not be telling a lie thereby and your solemn resolution or pledge will be fulfilled. The method thus shown to you is such that it can be practised.

Do not kill the idea which you have once had harboured in your resolve. For, slaying of idea, again and again brings about births, and deaths. Therefore, keep firm the idea that let the objects may come before our sight and yet we will not be tempted and shaken from our resolve, we will not sip our own spit. By remaining firm on your idea, a force would be generated within, a power would

dawn or descend. Then you will not suffer from such plight. People may call you a coward, abuse or denounce you, but care not the least. We have to make firm and resolute our ideas.

I will certainly show to you the easy means as per your nature or ability, but you alone will have to adopt it and stick fast to it. When I show to you a very easy and simple way, I will obtain your acceptance to this fact also that this means is practicable and within your reach, and that complete fulfilment of your life is really possible thereby. On your part, you have to just prepare yourself for this, and your work will be over in that. For, at root, human birth is meant only for God-realization. What else can be achieved, if He is not realized. The world can never be achieved. It is illusion that we have obtained rupees or families. Everything will perish, what is really begotten? World cannot be achieved, and from God we cannot be separated, this is the perfect truth.

We will do harm to none, cause pain to none—be determined and firm on this point. This seems to be an ordinary thing, but it is of very big value and importance. It is in no way less valuable than singing of God's glory (Bhajana), meditation (Dhyāna) and repetition of God's Name (Japa). It is a very valuable thing, but people pay no attention to it and lightly ignore it. As hunger begins to grow at the end of disease and strength begins to develop after the intake of food, as vitality or vigour tends to grow even by eating butterless and dry food, if digestion is all

right; so also if you remain well-determined and firm, then too a special, subtle power begins to grow in you. Thus you be of resolute will that come what may, you shall not tell a lie. You shall not act cleverly. Fear not that you will have to suffer insults thereby. If you conceal the truth by a facade of falsity, it will bring ever more insults. Without concealment (of truth) you will attract more honour, earn larger respect. Cunning will make you fall in the eyes and hearts of good people. You will be worthless for them. You will also fall away from Ṭhākurajī i.e., the Lord of all. Thus avoid cunning, tell things with frank uprightness. No one can put on the scaffold for that. Uprightness is not difficult to attain. This will become an extremely easy thing in view of one's decision to work for the spiritual welfare. There is a little fear in the beginning, but evaporates steadily thereafter.

In case somebody asks me anything, I will immediately explain things. Otherwise I will tell in midst of thousands of people that I do not know. Where is the hitch or hurdle in telling things straight? What else can people think other than this that I am ignorant, foolish, unintelligent? How can they make me realize God by regarding me intelligent? How can they create hurdle in my path of God-realization by regarding me illiterate or a buffoon? We shall tell what we know; we will not show what we do not know. And, many things there are which I know but will not divulge ! I had such occasions to tell this, that you may enquire this from me but I will not give any answer to it to you because it will do you no good.

Fear not of this that your hollowness will be out. If hollowness quits you, solidity will shine out. What will you do by keeping hollowness ? Wonder it is that Sage Vedavyāsa has recorded the fact of his birth time and again in a verse ! What a heart he has ! For this reason, he is respect-worthy. No harm occurs by expressing the truth. It is only illusion to deem so.

□ □

How to Be Free from the Desire for Sense-enjoyments?

Listener : When sense-objects appear before us, then we know not why we become fickle or greedy; what should we do at that time?

Swāmījī : One who has already learned the art of brandishing stick in advance, he alone can brave the enemy when so faced. But in case the enemy appears before you prior to your acquiring the art of brandishing the stick, you will then have to bear or suffer the charge of the enemy. You know many things of ‘Satsaṅga’ (association with the Holy) but on eve of sense-objects pouncing upon you, you forget them; they are of no avail. Says a poet—

**“They are all thy allies, my dear,
Till hour of trial is not nearby !
Gold is purified by fire,
Brass goes but black thereby !!”**

Crisis is the touchstone of friendship. A friend in need is a friend indeed. Yellow is gold and brass as well. But when put in fire gold shines bright whereas brass is blackened.

One is a learnt thing and the other one is a known thing. Whatever is known is real, which never undergoes any transmutation or change. A learnt thing remains limited to man’s intellect only, it does not reach the Self-within.

But a known thing has access direct to the core of man's heart. Till a thing reaches the heart or one's own self, that thing does not filter down characteristically in man's behaviour as it really should. He, whose goal is God-realization, he is never contented with things that are merely learnt. In want of such contentment, his search for God becomes really intense. In due course of his search he gains the experience of the Supreme Truth.

One is 'Satsaṅga' i.e., virtual rapport with truth through association with the Holy. And the other one is mere anecdote-telling, critical analysis and appreciation of the holy books etc. At many places utterances of saints, interpretational criticism etc., are available in plenty but the company of the God-realized saints and God-loving great souls is a rarity. Men of spiritual wisdom and God-experience were countable on finger-tips even before (in Satya Yuga, Tretā and Dwāpara Yuga); they are very few even today. Nowadays even students do not study scriptures with requisite care, total concern and right perspective. They merely appear at the examinations and get through. On being questioned, they cut a sorry figure. They can hardly express what they have actually read. What to talk of the knowledge of the Real ! It is our solemn prayer that you should delve deeper into the mysteries of the truth, and be not satisfied by sheer show of study.

When objects of sense-enjoyment come to our gaze, our heard up materials go waste. Here is a tale to corroborate. There was a Paṇḍita. He used to tell spiritual

stories every night. He had trained a tamed cat. He used to make the cat sit silently with an earthen lamp on its head; and in the light of that burning lamp, he would read out the stories sacred to God. If someone complained that his mind was unstable and fickle, he would say: "Look even this cat is far better. She sits quiet and calm. You are a man after all!" One person thought : 'Let me see how far can the cat preserve its calmness & quietness?' The very next day he brought with him a rat. At a time when Paṇḍitajī's Kathā (story-telling) was in full swing, that man let lose the rat before the cat. The moment the cat saw the rat, she pounced upon its prey without waiting for a moment and the lamp (Dīpaka) fell down. Such also is the mental state of human beings. While listening to Satsaṅga-talks they do keep the requisite silence with utmost solemnness, but when the objects of enjoyment appear before their senses, they lose patience, become slavish and fall a prey to them immediately. The reason is that they have in the heart of their hearts magnetic lure and attraction for money, and when the glitter of gold or money is visible, they lose all self-control. It becomes hard for them to abstain. It is not true that there was no lure of money even before; the attraction was already there, but it lay suppressed in his heart. If a copper bangle is buffed with gold polish, it would certainly look like a golden one. In the same manner, the 'learnt' things are just like the polish. But the 'known' things have their roots in personal experience and hence they are solid. He, who has personal experience within, never becomes unsteady come what

may. He remains the same as ever in all circumstances.

People regard God-realization as a very difficult thing : but, in reality, it is not so. Albeit redemption from enjoyment of sense-objects is difficult ! Lord has said :

bhogaiśvaryaprasaktānaṁ tayāpahṛtacetasāṁ,

vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ samādhau na vidhīyate.

(Gītā 2/44)

“No mind, lured by sense-objects and engrossed in sensual enjoyments and glory of things material, can ever enter, O Pārtha, the state of contemplation and divine communion transcendental.”

He, who is intensely attached with sense-enjoyments and acquisitiveness, cannot even decide to realize God. What then to talk of God-realization by him ! ‘We have to intuitively discover the Supreme Truth, envision it and work out our integral spiritual welfare in life’, this belief has not become an article of his faith. There is no resoluteness of will. Obviously, thus, till there is in the heart any attraction, importance of sensual joys, people may learn few things of divine life, but they cannot firmly decide for God-realization. When the resolve to realize God is not strong enough, how can there be anything like God-realization?

If you rise above inert materiality, unreal and transitory attractions of sense-objects, then God-realization is not at all difficult. Where is the difficulty in realizing the self-evident? The difficulty is that there has grown an attraction

for what 'is not'. It is not difficult to realize the 'Is'; it is difficult albeit to give up (attachment for) what 'is not'. What are we going to renounce if we don't renounce what 'is not'? 'Strange it is that we cannot give up the known 'unreal'. When it is well-known that these things are unreal, perishable, not everlasting, and transitory, and yet we do not give them up! This is a big mistake.

How to secure redemption from the lure of the unreal? Observe the discipline of Karmayoga—Yoga of Action—for this. The Lord in Gītā has spoken about this Yoga in a special way and sung its glory: 'karmayogo viśiṣyate' (Gītā 5/2). The clarity with which Karmayoga is propounded and explained in the Gītā is nowhere else in other scriptural texts. The purport of Karmayoga is : to make others happy and expect nothing in lieu thereof. Impart happiness to mother and father. Give happiness to wife and son, brother and nephew. Neighbours should also be made happy. Share happiness with all. If you follow this, the lure of the unreal will give way.

Let others be happy by you in one way or the other, such an emotion is of extreme value, it is not an ordinary thing. If you wish that you should not be lured and be fickle when sense-objects happen to be before you, then adhere in action to this principle as to how to make others happy. How can others be relieved? Things will not always remain with me; therefore, it is better that these are employed in other persons' services. The generation of such an emotion will produce intensity to do good to others.

When you develop keenness and love to be of good and of service to others, it would be easy for you to give up the lure even in presence of objects of sense-enjoyments. But—‘how can my happiness be safe? How can relief come to me? How can I be praised? How can my belief hold sway?’ If this emotion dominates, then you can never be salvaged. Your welfare shall never be possible. For, inculcation of such an emotion is nothing but animalism. It is not humanity.

In the generation or upsurge of the feeling to do good to others, the desire to enjoy sense-objects for one’s own self will, of its own accord, dwindle into nothingness.

□ □

Three Powers of Man

Each man has three powers inherent in him—powers to do, to know and to cognize. No man can ever say ‘I do nothing, nor do I wish to do anything; I know nothing, nor do I wish to know anything; I cognize nothing, nor do I need to cognize anything’. Man does do something and also wants to do something; he does know and needs to know too; he does cognize and wants to cognize also. If powers of doing, knowing and cognition are oriented or charged with ‘Yoga’, then these three will serve as a ‘liberating’ force. Yoga in doing will become ‘Karmayoga’, Yoga in knowing will be ‘Jñānayoga’ and Yoga in cognition will be ‘Bhaktiyoga’. Yoga will be accomplished when equanimity is established—‘samatvaṁ yoga ucyate’ (Gītā 2/48). ‘Samatvaṁ’ or equipoise means and implies freedom from envy and attachment, gladness and sadness.

Here is a unique or a peerless thing. There is no human being who cannot observe a discipline and adopt pathway to God. If he does not want to follow a discipline or walk the way to God at all—it is a different thing altogether. If he is eager, he can follow a path. Human life is meant for a divine discipline. This human birth is ‘Sādhana-yoni’, not ‘Karma-yoni’. Rest all subhuman and other births are ‘Bhoga-yoni’ i.e., spans of life meant for suffering pains and enjoying pleasures at sensual level only.

There is in man a power to do, to assert. A question

arises as to what next to do having done this or that. By implication, there is a force within us to act. The force to act will not cease or end by mere doing some acts; it would, on the contrary, gain further momentum. Doing and getting—(we will do this and gain this or that thereby) till these two things remain as motivating force of action, there will be 'Karma' (Action) only and not 'Karmayoga' (Yoga of Action). If doing is a consecration for others, action will soon get emptied of its force i.e., no doing or action will remain in balance.

Knowing the world does not make knowledge perfect or complete. By mere reading, knowledge is not fulfilled. Knowing will be complete only through knowledge of one's own self. Who am I? Till you know or realize this (I)—you may acquire any amount of knowledge, may study volumes after volumes, go through multitudes of scriptures and scan the whole universe in all its vivid variety, learn various scripts and be a linguist of world repute, master numerous arts and crafts, possess unique skills and professional tacts or talents—there will remain much residual to know. If you but know the essential or true nature of your own self, there remains nothing for you to know thereafter !

Your cognition will never reach its completion if you go on multiplying the objects of your cognition or belief in the world. Man will reach perfection only when he believes or cognizes God. God is essentially a matter of belief, of faith. For, without believing Him there is no other way to cognize or realize Him, to see Him, to know Him.

Obviously thus, if you go by this firm cognition that 'God is', then alone your cognition will be complete.

There should, however, be nothing in your cognition to contradict your knowledge (Jñāna). It is our common knowledge that there was no 'Saṁsāra' or worldliness ever before, that there will be no 'Saṁsāra' hereafter and that every moment in the present 'Saṁsāra' is in ceaseless flux, is constantly and continuously perishing. Thus the cognition of world is contrary to our knowledge (Jñāna), and is not everlasting. God was in the beginning ever before, shall ever be in the future and is eternally present even now—such a cognition is ever-abiding and permanent. God is a matter of sheer cognition, of mere faith, and not of logical scrutiny or reasoning. Only that can be a matter of logical analysis about which something is known or about which something is not known. We know nothing about God; there we have to have faith in His experience. You believe or you do not believe in God—you are absolutely free in your choice. One has to believe and have faith in God, in sages and seers, in scriptures and their authority. There is some support or substratum of the world; it is born of some entity, is dependent on some power, is preserved and nourished by someone and it will merge or disappear in someone—thus we will have to first cultivate a faith in this and then only He will be seen or envisioned !

Herein does lie our main mistake that we are not at all firm in our doings, knowings and cognitions. Determination should be so strong and resolve so firm that even God may Himself descend before us and tell us that we are

wrong and mistaken in our cognition or belief, we must be bold enough to say : ‘Not we but You are mistaken, O, Lord; You might have forgotten, I have not’. For, did not Mother Pārvatī tell :

“For million births a tough of war we had !

Virgin shall I go, if Śambhu I don’t wed !!

Never shall I fall back from sage Nārada’s teachings !

Even if Lord Śambhu himself might tell by hundred preachings !!

(Mānasa 1/81/3).

Such is a firmly resolved cognition! If we have to cognize or realize anything, it is God. That is all. We do not have to meet anyone else. We need neither sensual enjoyments nor do we crave for any sort of possessions or belongings. God is the only one we want; If we just grow into this belief, we are bound to ferry across the ocean of becomings safely. Nothing else remains to be done or known. Mere cognition with gritty determination will fulfil our life, help us to realize God and let us be perfect. We will want nothing, demand nothing, desire nothing. By mere believing this, our life’s work will be complete.

If you know thyself rightly, then your knowing will be complete. By mere right awareness or understanding of your essential self, the boat of your life will be on the other side of the shore. But in want of Self-realization, your entire and extensive knowledge of hell and heaven, earth, seas, space etc., will remain incomplete. Similarly, till you work for your own selfish interest only, you may accomplish

millions of tasks, reach even the impregnable abode of Brahmā, you will ever fall short of completion in work. Something will still remain to be done. Only when you do work for others, nothing will remain for you to do.

It thus means that 'doing' is for others, 'knowing' is of one's own self, and 'cognizing' is firmly believing in God. If there is rocklike firmness in anyone of these three, all the three would be simultaneously fulfilled. You may choose either to do or to know, or to believe. If there is in you intensity of force propelling you to do more, then do act and work; if there is a powerful propensity to cognize and believe, do believe. Be firm on either of the three. Nothing thereafter remains to do, to know and to believe.

Doing for others is 'Karmayoga'. Knowing oneself is 'Jñānayoga'. Believing in God is 'Bhaktiyoga'. Perfection in anyone of them would *ipso facto* result in the thorough fulfilment of all the three. When nothing remains to do, know or believe, there is then the perfect fulfilment of human life.



Gain from Unfavourable Circumstances

Human body is considered to be the best (door way to Divinity): ‘labdhvā sudurlabhamidam bahusambhavānte’ (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 11.9.29). God, Who showers grace without cause, confers human body by His utter mercifulness and kind grace :

kabahūka kari karunā nara dehī,
deta īśa binu hetu sanehī.

(Mānasa, Uttara. 44.3)

As God has by mere compassion and grace given us the human frame, so also whatever circumstance He has given us is also given by Grace. Whether our actions are good or otherwise, whatever kind of actions we have done, is of little concern! The important thing is that the dispenser of their fruits is our supremely Dear Friend—‘suhṛdam sarvabhūtānām’ (Gītā 5/29).

From worldly view-point, circumstance is of two kinds : pleasure-yielding and pain-yielding. But, from spiritual point of view, the circumstance is not of two kinds. To them who love to have God-realization, there are no two kinds of circumstance. For, God has given this human body only for His realization, has conferred the circumstance also for that very realization. Therefore, whatever nature of circumstance we have obtained—whether the most favourable of the favourable circumstances or the most unfavourable of the unfavourable circumstances or the circumstance of

mixed nature i.e., favourable-cum-unfavourable circumstance—it is only meant for our spiritual welfare. Whatever nature of the circumstance is made available, it is merely the instrument of God-realization—‘sādhana dhāma moccha kara dvārā’ (Mānasa, Uttara. 43/4). He who is a ‘Bhogī’ i.e., a seeker of sensual pleasures, to him the circumstance is of dual nature : pleasure-yielding and pain-yielding. In Yogī’s view, however, circumstance is never of two sorts.

For accomplishment of spiritual well-being, an unfavourable circumstance is far better than the favourable circumstance. Why is it better? It is so because in a favourable circumstance there is a possibility, because of attachment, of going down in the mire of worldliness but it is not so in midst of an unfavourable circumstance; instead there is the manliness of walking only towards the God-head. For a seeker of God, only two things are of supreme value : withdrawal from worldliness and complete adherence to God. In a favourable circumstance we do get attached to the world; thus there is to be an effort to withdraw from the world. But in an unfavourable circumstance no effort is needed in the act of withdrawal from the world. Therefore, half of the seeker’s work is automatically done in the unfavourable circumstance!

Unfavourable circumstance is the principal means of God-realization. If we do not like unfavourableness of the circumstance, then we are not at all true seekers of God. We will be real seekers when we believe that the God-sent circumstance is auspicious for us. This is a

matter of utterly perfect principle! Scriptures tell us :

lālane tādane māturnākāruṇyam yathārbhake,
tadvadeva maheśasya niyanturguṇadoṣayoḥ.
 i.e.,

As in nourishment and admonitions,

never is there Mother's un-grace !

So too in control of merits and sins,

never is there the Lord's un-grace !!

In loving the child and in slapping the child, if need be, mother is never of two hearts; she is never devoid of grace or love. What to say of 'want of grace' (a-Kṛpā), there is instead a special grace in her admonitions. When love swells in any Mother's bosom, she will distribute sweetmeat Laḍḍūs among all the children; but she will not slap all the children who are creating nuisance. She will slap only her child. Likewise God showers favourable circumstances on all people alike, but God confers unfavourable circumstances only on them on whom He has special grace, whom He regards His own dear devotees! In unfavourable circumstances, God's special grace is obtained, sins are destroyed and progressive development is achieved. Whosoever have been the great and good ones in history, they have mostly progressed only in adverse circumstances. Very rare saints there have been who have progressed in favourable circumstances.

Look, let me show you direct from life. When any living being or creature gets pain; then there are with that

being many well-intentioned people of goodness in a bid to see its pain off. But if instead there is a 'Bhogī' person, he will not have the easy goodwill and co-operation of the good ones; he will not be liked by all. Good saints may be happy with him too but everyone will not be pleased with him. The heart of pedestrians burns by seeing the 'Bhogī' enjoying a car-ride. They do not co-operate with him; instead they oppose him. As people do not co-operate in 'Bhogī' person's pleasures, so in God, too, there is a little indifference for them. As when the child is gay and happy, enjoying the game, there is in mother's heart a little carefreeness, if not indifference. When the child cries and is unhappy, then the mother's special care or attention is centred on that child. In the same way, there is God's special grace on man in a trying or pain-yielding circumstance! As your co-operation with man in pain is both special and natural, so also His co-operation with painful devotees is of special kindness and grace.

If, after the onset of trouble and unhappiness, a seeker becomes specially cautious, then he will have progress; but if he begins to weep and bewail his lot, his development will be hampered. There was a child of five-to-seven years of age and his parents died. Now he is of thirty years. There is another fellow who is thirty years of age, has his parents, grand-parents, brothers and sisters all alive. Who of the two will be more intelligent and clever? Certainly he who is an orphan. Reason being that progress or development during strenuous and adverse circumstances is much more speedy and steady than in favourable ones!

There is ever new progress during unhappiness. What does it prove? That the circumstance that God has given us is only for our well-being, for our upliftment !

In enjoyment of 'Bhoga', intelligence decays; it develops not. It spells carelessness during pleasures. Sleep overwhelms during carefree atmosphere of more restfulness. Pain and anxiety are the enemies of sleep and carelessness. In an adverse circumstance if we take to spiritual practices, our course or practice will take wings because our sins get destroyed and special help and co-operation of saints, Sādhus and God flow forth in our life. Man becomes cautious and God-concerned during unhappiness. He is not so careful in pleasure-seeking moments. Amidst pleasures he gladdens and his ego swells. He transgresses limits of religion 'hr̥ṣṭo dṛpyati dṛpto dharmādatikrāmati'. But an unhappy person cannot afford to transgress religions. They who are highly rich persons keep armed guards on the gates of their bungalows. They block the way. No Sādhus can go to their houses. No beggars have any access there. But to a poor man's house any saint or Sādhu can have an easy access; and he will get his 'Bhikṣā' or ordinary edibles, bread etc. The poor man thinks as to what act of charity or goodness his merit may shine, his well-being may take place, some blessing of a saint may do him good! So he will serve the saints with alms etc. Whatever may be the emotions behind his brain, he will give. But a rich man will not have these things in his heart. He will refuse and tell the Sādhus etc., to buzz off. Thus, no much good work can be done by a happy fellow, because he is sunk

in sense-enjoyments. An unhappy man does not sink in 'Bhogas' or sense-pleasures; he remains indifferent. So he is good for himself, for others, and for God; and so are all—God and people—good to him in his views. Thus the seeker should feel glad in pain-yielding circumstances; should feel blissful and blessed that God has, by His kindness and grace, given him such an opportunity (of God-realization). Kuntī understood this fact well; and that's why she prayed to God for bestowing pain on her and said : 'O, Lord ! let crises and miseries be my lot always'—'vipadaḥ santu naḥ śaśvattatra tatra jagadguro' (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 1/8/25). Rantideva also said : "Let me suffer all the sorrows and miseries of all the unhappy ones of the world so that they may be free from pains of the world !"—'ārtim prapadye' khiladehabhājāmantaḥsthitō yena bhavantyaduḥkhāḥ' (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 9/21/12). What a strange prayerful demand ! I should suffer the miseries of all—this is not an ordinary thing ! This is a very high and a noble vision.

Things of pleasures and comforts are not for 'Bhoga' or enjoyment. Comfort-materials are for doing good to others, to help others. This body has not been given to us for sensual joys—'Bhogas'—'ehi tana kara phala biṣaya na bhāi' (Mānasa, Uttara. 44/1), this has been for further development of Spirit. Man should become happy for all time, his sorrows should end for ever ! Only for fulfilment of this aim this human body has been provided.

Listener : All are the companions of happiness; nobody lives (in company) during miseries and sorrows;

Svāmījī : During the day of sorrows and miseries, they who are ‘Bhogīs’ do not come to your support. The gentlemen on the contrary, shower special grace on the unhappy people and extend their co-operation to the miserable ones. They who are friends only of happiness are only ‘Bhogīs’. They desire happiness and comforts from you, they do not want your good or well-being. The companions of happiness only are guiles, they are the deceivers. They want to loot their own happiness from you. But the gentle people want the good and well-being of other ones only.

**‘gacchataḥ skhalanam kvāpi bhavatyeva pramādataḥ,
hasanti durjanāstatra samādadhati sajjanāḥ’.**

i.e, If someone falls while walking and gets hurt, the crooked ones will laugh at him. But the gentle ones will come to console politely enquiring : “Brother ! where are you hurt? Where art thou going? May we take you to your home?” Obviously, during the period of stress and fall, the good ones will lend you their full support, and we register much more progress during this time.

Secret of Freedom

Human body is meant for God-realization only. Whatever circumstances come before it are, from beginning to end, a material meant only for that realization. Only by apt and good use thereof God-realization is made possible. It is inherent in human mind to surmise that if the circumstance is improved a little, if the body regains its health and vitality, if want of wealth is substituted by opulence thereof, if the situation takes a favourable posture, then we will start doing 'Bhajana'. In reality, there is no need for changing the circumstance. God-realization is possible in whatever circumstance is one placed. In the achievement of worldly things there is, indeed, a necessity of different set of conditions, abilities and circumstances; but in the realization of God whatever abilities you have, in whatever conditions or circumstances you are placed in, are enough—God-realization can be possible by their right and full utilization. How wonderful it is ! There should only be your earnest desire, the only desire of realizing God. This desire should be so intense and strong that all desires other than that of God-realization are totally destroyed. It is said of the Lord—'na tvatsamo'styabhyadhikaḥ kuto'nyaḥ' (Gītā 11/43) i.e., 'there is none like You, what to say of being better or higher than Thee?' Thus, since God is the Supreme, desire for God-realization should be the Supreme.

Let there be only one eager and intense desire for

God-realization ! Let me be alive, let me be healthy without any ailment, let me be rich, let me be able and wiser one; let others hold me in high esteem, sing my glory, offer respect to me—not a single desire like these should ever haunt me. Even in absence of any ability, education, power etc., God-realization is very easy—I see all this very clearly. All the differences which there are—all are from the worldly view-point only. Someone is able, someone unable; someone is wise and someone fool; someone is very rich and someone very poor; someone is clever and cunning while someone else is just very simple—thus there does exist a variety of differences from worldly point of view. But when renunciation of worldliness and realization of God are the only concern, then there cannot be such differences. Whatever be the state or circumstance of the worldly life, it has to be intentionally given up; one has to rise above it and no kinship whatever with it has to be entertained. What relation do we have with that which has to be given up, whether that is superfine or worst in quality?

Someone is intelligent, someone is a dunce; someone is wealthy and someone poor; someone is able and someone is not—these conditions or states belong to the realm of the world. If one has to turn one's back upon the world, then the sense of being wise and wealthy has also to be given up; likewise the sense of being foolish and pauper has also to be relinquished ! Reason being that God-realization cannot be had through worldliness; but it can only be through its renunciation. The worldly abilities

etc., have a limitation but renunciation knows no bounds or limits. Renunciation is limitless whereby illimitable and infinite God is achieved. Thus the support of worldly things, and their value or importance one has in the heart, have to be given up. No one can give up the world as such and no liberation is ever possible thereby! Were liberation thus possible, then all those who die should have attained salvation; because they go away (from the world) having left behind their mortal coil, the body, riches, family etc., and they do not thereafter write letters, send no messages or news—they renounce so much, indeed! But liberation—Mukti—is not possible through such outer renunciation only. Renunciation should be from within, from the innermost recesses of the heart ! The attachment, intense longing, lovingness and importance—these are the causes of bondage—‘kāraṇaṁ guṇasaṅgo’sya, sadasadyonijanmasu (Gītā 13/21). When internally the relation has to be sapped, then whether a thing is extremely fine or worse, it is scarce or in plenty—what difference does it make?

Listener : When God created this world, why at all did He spread out this big and wide network of His Māyā (illusion)?

Svāmījī : Look, it is said that God’s Māyā has entangled us; but it is not so. Really viewed, it is not the Māyā of God that has entangled us; it is our own dishonesty of regarding God’s Māyā as our own that has entangled us. We get enmeshed only in those things and beings whom we believe to be our own. We are not entangled in those

things etc., whom we do not regard as our own.

Listener : Sir, you had observed that God wills the good and well-being of all?

Svāmījī : Yes, God does wish that, but He is not coercive; He does not force His wish upon anyone. Great ones do not compel people. And God is the Lord of the great ones, how and why shall He compel at all !

As I say, as I do, others also should likewise do—this tendency is among animals too. Good people do not have this attitude. When you insist upon the good people and persuade them, then alone they become great and accept Guru-ship. They do not have this tendency that ‘I should be the Guru of all’ ‘I should, as per my own will, take work from others’. This is no good trend at all. It is a thing of a very low order. Lord Śrī Rāma while instructing His subjects or people, has very candidly said that if I tell you to do anything which is improper, you should abandon fear and refuse Me to do that—

jaum anīti kachu bhāṣaum bhāi,
tau mohi barajahu bhaya bisarāi.

(Mānasa, Uttara. 43/3)

i.e., “If anything against Law I tell you, O Brother !

Abandon fear and refuse to follow the improper !!

It implies, therefore, ‘not to do as I bid you to’, but to do as you yourself deem right and proper, God compels none, never!

If you need to undergo a surgical operation in a

hospital, then you will have to give a written undertaking that if you die, it is your risk; only then you will be operated upon. If you want work to be done by anyone, then you will have to give him total authority to do your work. It is in your hand to give authority; it is not in your hand to get authority. Thus God does not usurp anybody's right. The Lord drives the horses of Arjuna and obeys his commands. Arjuna orders Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa to carry and stop his chariot in between the two armies—‘senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthāpaya me’cyuta’ (Gītā 1/21). The Lord obeys and keeps the chariot between the two armies—‘senayorubhayormadhye sthāpayitvā rathottamam (Gītā 1/24); but He does not take him under His shelter, rather tells him to seek surrender—‘māmekam śaraṇam vraja (Gītā 18/66). It is not God's job to take one in His shelter.

God gives freedom to all. He is liberal who gives freedom to all, and yet does not exercise his right over any of them. He who exercises his right over others is a low sort of man. But nowadays an opposite mentality has grown that if they exercise their right or authority over others, they are big or great men. They become great when others obey their biddings. In reality, you become a slave if others obey you; you won't be great ! He who obeys the command becomes the Master and he who is obeyed becomes a slave. He who does not want anyone to work as his slave or to work under his thumb or auspices, or has even no desire that someone should act at his behest—if someone obeys even his word, or acts in consonance with his mind's inclination, then too he will have to be

a slave. A devotee who works and lives according to God's mandates, becomes the crest-jewel of the Lord. The Lord says : 'bhagata mere mukuta maṇi' or 'aham bhaktaparādhīnaḥ' (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 9/4/63) i.e., 'I am the slave of my devotees'. If a servant always works in accordance with the Master's biddings, then when occasion so demands, the master also has to honour the word of his servant. Thus if somebody makes other one his slave, then he too will have to suffer subjection sometime—this is the Law.

The other person must obey my word, act according to what I say, follow my mind, become just as I want him to be—the name of this very thing is 'desire'. Desire is the name of getting things done as per one's disposition. A man of desires will never have 'peace'—'tadvatkāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve sa śāntimāpnoti na kāmakāmī' (Gītā 2/70). Renunciation of desire is at once followed by peace—'tyāgācchāntiranantaram' (Gītā 12/12). But, today, things are fast moving in opposite direction : people want peace but at the same time they so desire and want that their wives, their sons, their parents, even their Gurujī should do as they want them to. Not merely this. Even God should do as per their asking. Since we are God's devotees, God should act according to us. Even Sage Nāradaḥ said thus : 'karahu so begi dāsa maim torā (Mānasa, Bāla. 132/4) i.e., 'I am thy servant. Please speed up my work'. All want that others should obey them; who will then do as per biddings? Someone tells that he should 'follow my command'; the other says that he should 'obey my orders'; then both are 'Ṭhagas' (cheats). There is no thuggery (cheating)

between two 'Ṭhagas'. The best and the brave one is he who acts on other's saying. 'I should obey all, should act as he tells me'—these are the characteristic features of the good and the worthy ones. God is the best among all; how shall then God say that one should do this, and in that manner?

If there is a good thing, then why should we want it to be done by others? Does not the other one want to do a good thing? Let that thing be placed before others with the submission that if they wish they may do, if they don't, then they may not. Even God has said : 'sunahu karahu jo tumhahi sohāī' (Mānasa, Uttara. 43/3). He may or may not do—therein we have to remain equanimous—'siddhyasidhyoḥ samo bhūtvā' (Gītā 2/48). It is our job to place the best things before others; it is not our concern to get things done by others. If we want the work to be done by another person, then we will have to be dependent on him. He may know it or not. It is a blissful thing if he does or does not do our work. Why is it blissful? It is so because we will have to be under an obligation if he does our work and we will be freed from that if he declines to do as we bid. We will not be bound to him. The saints and seers, the great souls who are unconcerned and desireless recluses, spiritually free and great ones—and God—Who never tell, never even wish—if somebody acts in accordance with their selfless words of wisdom, then they too have to be bound, to be dependent on others.

God and His dear devotees do not subject others to their biddings or views. That does not imply that if others

follow their advice, they will not be dependent or be free from the subjection of others.

There is a great joy or spiritual bliss in doing the work of devotees.

At Vṛndāvana one devotee did not have the 'Darśana' of Lord Bihārījī. People would say : 'Aye, Bihārījī is standing right in front ! But he would reply : 'O Brother, I do not see Him'. In this way, three days passed away but he did not have even the glimpse of Bihārījī. That devotee thus thought : "All people do see Bihārījī and have His Darśana, but I do not see Him. I am thus a great sinner, for the Lord does not give me 'Darśana'. I must thus drown myself in the holy river Yamunā and thus end myself up." Having thus surmised he walked towards Yamunājī during night time. There alongside the river bank a leper was sleeping. God told him in a dream to catch hold of the feet of that man who would just arrive there. By his grace he would at once be free from his disease of leprosy. That leper, got up and sat down in a pose of alertness. As soon as the devotee happened to be there, the leper caught hold of his feet and told him to end his leprosy. But the devotee implored to him a lot telling: I am a great sinner, I do not have the vision of Śrī Bihārījī and painfully requested the leper to free his feet. But the leper did not release his feet. Ultimately, the leper said: "All right! Atleast say", 'let thy disease go away!' But the devotee replied that he did not have the ability and power to say so. But when the leper insisted a lot, the devotee said: 'let thy disease of leprosy disappear!' In a flicker of moment after devotee's

this utterance the leprosy totally disappeared. Thereafter the leper narrated his whole dream sequence wherein God had asked him to catch hold of the devotee's feet. Having heard all that, the devotee pondered over the matter and decided not to die of drowning that day. He returned to the temple of Śrī Bihārījī and he was graced by God by His divine vision ! In a light mood of blessedness he enquired of Ṭhākurajī as to why He had not granted him His Darśana earlier. Ṭhākurajī replied : "You had never placed any request to Me throughout your life. Therefore, I had no cheeks to appear before you. Now when you had prayed to Me to free the leper from the disease, I have gathered strength to show My face to you." What does it all mean? It means that he who does not want anything from God, God becomes his slave.

Hanumānjī did God's work and God felt indebted to him, He became his slave—'sunu suta tohi urina mairi nāhīm' (Mānasa 32/4). He who serves becomes great and he who is served becomes small. But God and His devotees do not feel shy in becoming small or low. They knowingly become small. Even in their becoming small they really do not become small; and there is never in them the pride of being great !

Salvation is Easy

If we crave for spiritual welfare, then whatever we know is enough, more knowledge than that is not necessary; and to get more than what we have is also not necessary. If you want crisis, need to sink in sense- enjoyment, enter the cycle of births and deaths, then you do need more goods or belongings. If you long for salvation, then you do have whatever is necessary; you have already been given whatever was needful for you. Whatever is known is sufficient, not less, for one's welfare. There is thus neither any need to know more nor to acquire more. Salvation—'Kalyāṇa'—is undoubtedly possible with whatever we know or have.

This body, the world was not heretofore nor shall it be there even after. As such, our relationship with it was also not there before and it shall not be in future—this everyone knows. Trust not, then the body and the world; do not seek support or shelter there. Likewise, we have got to make the best use of things what we possess, and bestow salvation on all. Reason being that there is no flaw in God's providence or constitution. God is the 'Suhṛd', the Good Friend, of all the 'Jīvas', living creatures, without exception. He gave human organism for the welfare of the 'Jīvas'; so He did not leave any defect or deficiency for man's salvation; He did not keep in him any kind of shortage of Jñāna or knowledge, nor even any shortage of materials or goods, nor of ability even. Had He kept any sort of paucity, it would have been quite unbecoming and improper

to say, 'human body is given for divine destiny or welfare'.

Looked at from the view-point of actions— 'Karmas'— whatever is of utmost necessity is already made available to us and with those goods alone our welfare can be achieved. Who will expect more from us? What we cannot give or do, who will expect that from us? The limit within which or upto which we can do or yield, if we do that, our welfare is guaranteed—there is no doubt about it.

Looked at from the view-point of knowledge, our relation with anything is non-existent. This is our commonly studied or known observation. When no relationship exists between us and goods, where remains the question whether the materials we possess are more or less in quantity ! With goods which are produced and which perish we never had any kind of relation; there 'is' not, nor shall it ever be and cannot be ! If and when such awareness or experience dawns, then the welfare will bloom, realization would take place.

Thus seen from the view-point of the Yoga of Devotion— Bhaktiyoga—the Law of the Supremely Beloved Well-wisher God (Parama Suhrd) is perfect and without any flaw; from the view-point of the Yoga of Action— 'Karmayoga'—whatever is made available is enough and full; and from the view-point of the Yoga of Knowledge— Jñānayoga—we have no relationship at all with any act or material. So, there is no need to know anything new, to acquire or collect anything new. For our salvation we have all material and full time with us. As for the time, I tell you that there is so much of time in human birth that even in a small part of it, salvation is a happy

possibility! God-realization is a smaller work, whereas time at our disposal is much more. Though one need not have salvation twice, but if need there be then one can repeat it five, seven, or even ten times—man has so much of time with him. Even goods are excessive. The total material available will not be put to its full use, man will have to die leaving behind much of his goods. Nothing of transitory or ephemeral nature ever belonged to you, nor it is or will ever be yours !—This understanding is also with you.

There is no shortage at all of time, understanding and material goods. If there is any, it is only of one thing that we do not want our spiritual upliftment i.e., 'Kalyāṇa'. Only when we ourselves think of it and want it, our 'Kalyāṇa' would take place. Salvation would not happen because other persons tell of it. Even if it takes place because others speak about it, then too at its roots must lie your willingness to accept their word and to work out your salvation with determined effort. Other's advice must become your own conviction before it dynamizes you for your welfare.

The sum of responsibility that is on you, you are to do only that much; then your good is secure. More and more intelligent you become, larger develops your responsibility. As much less your intelligence is, so much less is your responsibility. Tax is imposed on income only. Imposition of tax is on possessions. How can there be any tax, if there is no possession or ownership thereof?

More knowledge you acquire, more things you accumulate, more would grow your responsibility.

Were there any necessity of the availability of more goods

for your salvation, God would have certainly given you more. Were there any need for time, He would have given you more time. What to talk of 'would have given', He has already given. God has given more goods, more intelligence, more time, more ability, more strength. God's treasure is endless, infinite, measureless. Whatsoever strength or power the Mother has to rear the child, is all in all for the baby ! So is the power of our Lord, it is all in all for us. Omnipotent, Omniscient, Supremely Merciful, Supremely Generous, Best Friend and Sovereign Lord has bestowed this human frame for the thorough welfare of the 'Jīvas'—where is any kind of deficiency or shortage in it? Only by accepting this simple truth, your path would be at once clear. But do not try to be clever and cunning, be honestly straightforward—

sarala subhāva na mana kuṭilāi,
jathā lābha samtoṣa sadāi.

(Mānasa, Uttara. 46/1)

(Lack of crookedness, a mind free from perversity and absolute contentment with whatever may be got—this is all that is needed.)

As much simple and straightforward you are, so much is your path straight and clear of all hazards. Cleverer you are, tougher is your way, full of more and more difficulties.

You have to do only that much which you can. You have to know only that much which you can. You have to cognize or accept only that much which you can. There is no necessity to do more, know more, and accept more. Make the best possible use of whatever you have !

Invaluable Advice

In fact every human being is a learner. The bodies of all moving and unmoving beings such as gods, gnomes, devils, beasts and birds etc., aim at reaping the fruit of their past actions. But human life aims at attaining the knowledge of the Supreme rather than attainment of ignorance and pleasures.

The human body has been bestowed upon us only to realize God. So a human being is indeed he who realizes God. The purpose of human life is to follow the spiritual path. If a human being feels happy and sad in favourable and unfavourable circumstances, it means that he only reaps the fruit of his past actions. Again if he performs new actions in order to reap their fruit, it means that he attaches importance to the fruit. Therefore humanity consists in the performance of duty according to scriptural ordinance in order to realize God by making the favourable-unfavourable circumstances the spiritual means. From this view-point every human being can be called a striver, a learner.

The human life has been divided into four stages—celibate, household, retired and renounced. The four stages respectively are from birth to twenty-five years, from twenty-six to fifty years, from fifty-one to seventy-five years and from seventy-six to one hundred years. The main duty of the persons of each stage respectively is obedience

to the preceptor, hospitality, penance (austerity) and meditation on the Supreme (Absolute).

A celibate (learner) is of two kinds—‘Naiṣṭhika’ and ‘Upakurvāṇa’. The former are those who having renounced attachment to pleasures by discrimination, observe celibacy throughout their life and follow the spiritual path of God-realization; while the latter are those who can’t renounce attachment to pleasures by discrimination. So they enter the household life in order to root out attachment to pleasures. They get married according to the ordinance of the scriptures, earn money and enjoy pleasures by following righteousness from the view-point of renunciation. In them there is predominance of righteousness. By following the path of righteousness they naturally develop dispassion for pleasures and prosperity—‘Righteousness leads to dispassion’ (Mānasa 3/16/1) and they start following the path of God-realization.

Question:—Who is called a learner (student)?

Answer:—A learner is he who wants to study only. What does he want to study? He wants to study the science of the soul (metaphysics), the best science of all. The Lord declares, “of science, I am the science of the soul” (Gītā 10/32).

Question:—What is real science?

Answer:—Knowledge of any kind is science. Knowledge of several scriptures, arts, crafts and languages etc., is science. But in fact real science (knowledge) is that in which nothing remains to be known and a man

attains salvation—‘That science leads to salvation’ (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1/19/41). If anything remains to be known, it means that that is not real science, or real knowledge.

One is ‘Śabda Brahma’ (Veda) and one is Para Brahma (God). “If one has known ‘Śabda Brahma’ without knowing ‘Para Brahma’ his labour has been in vain” (Śrīmadbhāgavata 11/11/18).

Therefore the knowledge of God is the main science (knowledge) and it makes this human life successful.

The science which helps us in earning our livelihood is also science but it is not conducive to God-realization. It sometimes proves to be an obstacle to God-realization because it gives birth to pride. The man who is proud of his knowledge (wisdom) will rebut the point of the God-realized soul with his arguments, will strike him dumb and thus will be deprived of the real benefit. Therefore it has been said:—

“There is no use of a person’s study of the Scriptures and the Vedas as well as of his fine prose and poetic compositions if his mind is not concentrated on ‘Yaśodānandana’ (Lord Kṛṣṇa)”.

Question:—What is the need to gain knowledge?

Answer:—Without knowledge human life is futile and a man remains just like an animal. So knowledge is very essential.

Every action is performed with an aim. Human life aims at God-realization in which there is total absence of sorrows. Without achieving this aim a human being is just

like beasts and birds who reap the fruit of their past actions. If a human being without availing of the opportunity of God-realization remains entangled in pleasures in order to reap the fruit of his past actions, it leads him to a downfall. In the scriptures such a person is called 'Ārūḍhacyuta' viz., one who has a downfall after reaching the pinnacle (Śrīmadbhāgavata 11/7/74).

Is it human to follow the cycle of birth and death and go to eighty-four lac forms of lives? So in human life a student (learner) should realize God because there is no greater gain than that. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā declares:—

“Having gained which a man does not reckon any other gain greater than that and wherein established he is not moved even by the heaviest affliction” (Gītā 6/22).

In fact the knowledge-divine is the real knowledge, other knowledges are nothing but ignorance because having gained the knowledge-divine nothing remains to be gained. But it does not mean that other sciences (knowledges) should not be studied. Other sciences should also be studied. It is proper to gain knowledge of other languages and scripts etc., but it is not proper to remain engrossed in them; because by remaining engrossed in them, human life will go in vain. Secondly by being well-versed in mundane sciences a person gets proud of his knowledge which strengthens his bondage. It is said—“Even having studied the scriptures people continue to be foolish. In fact a scholar is he who acts according to the ordinance of the scriptures.”

“The aim of human life is God-realization and the

means to realize Him is rendering service to the world. So the mundane sciences, riches and ranks etc., should be utilized in the service of the world. They can be utilized in rendering service to the world rather than in God-realization because God-realization does not depend on mundane sciences. He who possesses the mundane sciences is responsible for the service of the world because a man has to pay octroi on goods and tax on income. If there are no goods, there is no question of payment of octroi; and if there is no income, there is no question of payment of income tax.

If a man is praised because of his mundane sciences, riches and ranks etc., in one way he is censured. The reason is that it is his mundane sciences etc., which are praised, he himself is censured. Therefore he who regards himself superior because of his mundane sciences etc., in fact proves himself inferior.

Question:—Should a person study only in boyhood or throughout his life?

Answer:—The rule of study only in boyhood applies to a 'Upakurvāṇa' celibate (the celibate who enters the household life after celibacy). But a 'Naiṣṭhika' celibate (He who observes celibacy throughout his life) should go on studying the scriptures and the knowledge-divine throughout his life.

Question:—What fate does a learner meet with if he dies while studying?

Answer:—Study is a practice of austerity which purifies the learner—"Practice of the study of sacred texts

is called austerity of speech” (Gītā 17/15). Therefore he is far better than those persons who are entangled in mundane pleasures and prosperity. He is superior to them to the extent he has renounced pleasures and prosperity.

Inclination to whatever study a learner has when he leaves the body at the time of death, the same he will study in the next birth according to the past impressions.

If a person studies with the aim of earning his livelihood and while studying if he dies, he will meet with the fate of a common man because it is the emotion or the spirit rather than action which leads to salvation.

If the person who studies to humiliate others and to nourish his pride dies while studying, he becomes a ghost, an evil spirit or a devil.

If a person dies studying volumes with interest in order to know their contents, he in the next birth of a human being will study those volumes. If such a learner again receives human life, it is no less reward for him. If he dies while studying knowledge-divine, having a curiosity to know the truth (reality), he will attain salvation. But if he has no curiosity to know the reality, he will become a ‘Yoga-Bhraṣṭa’ (he who deviates from Yoga viz., God-realization).

If the person dies while performing his duty in the form of study treating it as a bidding of God and at that time he thinks of God, he will attain salvation (God-realization)*. But if the thought of God does not come to his mind, he will become a ‘Yoga-Bhraṣṭa.’

* He who departs from the body, thinking of Me alone even at the time of death, attains My being; there is no doubt about this (Gītā 8/5).

Question:—What is the difference between the ancient and the modern students?

Answer:—The more the ancient learners studied, learnt, experienced and used their learning for others, the more polite and humble they became. Whatever subject they studied, they went in its depth without thinking of what others did. But modern students study and learn but don't experience learning. So they feel proud of their learning. Moreover the knowledge thus gained without experience proves to be harmful (dangerous) for one's ownself as well as for the world.

Students of modern times who are attached to mundane pleasures and prosperity, having gained knowledge think that unlike the ancient students they possess right knowledge. They laugh at old students and hold the opinion that ancient philosophy was superfluous. Why do they laugh at ancient students? The reason is that they have merely learnt, they have not experienced knowledge. But those who have experienced it honour ancient philosophers and their experience.

Ancient scholars besides gaining knowledge worshipped God. So they instead of possessing valour possessed discrimination. But students of today possess valour rather than discrimination because they don't go in the depth of the subject.

Ancient scholars also felt proud of their knowledge. But the deeper they went in knowledge, the more their pride melted away and they became light (humble) from within, in the same way as a patient suffering from fever feels when his fever is abated. Bhartṛhari declares :—

“Having gained a little knowledge I was intoxicated with pride like an elephant and I held that I was omniscient. But when in the company of learned persons I gained some more knowledge, I realized that I was a fool and thus as fever abates my pride abated” (Nītiśataka).

Those philosophers had a little egoistic notion and their philosophies were different from each other. So each of them had his different style of evaluation and proved his philosophy superior to those of others. But having realized God that subtle egoistic notion was wiped out. It means that so long as philosophers had the egoistic notion, they differentiated their philosophy from those of others and regarded their philosophy superior to others. But when their egoistic notion was wiped out, in spite of their different procedure (process) they ceased to differentiate between their philosophy and those of others. The philosophers of today have an access only to that differentiation rather than realization which is beyond it.

In ancient times students received education from their teachers by revering them while the students of today regard their teachers as their servants viz., they order them. Education received from servants does not develop. In ancient times a teacher expelled any student from seminary and admitted any student according to his own sweet will. But today the case is reverse. In the past teachers imparted education by taking high seats while students sat on low seats. But today students sit on benches and chairs while teachers teach standing near the black-board.

In ancient times students besides receiving education for mundane dealings had an eye specially on spirituality. They knew the mundane science as well as the spiritual one. They had high and noble aims. But students of today are not well-versed even in the mundane science. So there is no question of their knowing the spiritual science. They cannot teach properly the subjects which they have learnt. They pass in an examination to get certificates (degrees) by adopting foul means and get pleased by receiving degrees of B.A., M.A., Śāstrī and Ācārya etc. They receive only practical mundane education which is useful in earning more money and enjoying more pleasures. They don't think of the main aim of human life which is salvation or God-realization.

As two lamps kept in vicinity remove the darkness underneath each other, so did students in the past discuss and debate mundane and spiritual topics and thus gained a thorough knowledge while it is rarely seen in the students of today. They hold that they have become learned (expert) and this thought blocks their progress.

In ancient days students were polite and obedient while today they are indisciplined and impertinent. They pour ridicule on other persons in schools, colleges and at stations etc., play mischiefs with them and cause sufferings to them. They instead of having devotion and reverence for their teachers slight and insult them. The result is that they themselves are slighted by their offspring in future. Thus they are happy neither here nor hereafter.

Ancient students went in the depth of books, got

mastery over them, understood reality and could make invention with that knowledge. Such students were called 'Ācārya'. But modern students understand neither reality (essence) of education nor do they want to understand it. But if they are devoted to study and have a curiosity to know reality (essence), they can understand it.

If ancient students received any new fact, they stuck to it, attached importance to it, valued it, understood reality about it and by reflection retained it. So that fact or knowledge became their permanent possession. But if modern students receive any uncommon fact, they don't find anything uncommon in it because they do not go in its depth.

Ancient students without getting entangled in the outward glamour understood the deep thoughts and had curiosity to know more and more as their ignorance pinched them. But students of today are not so much eager and zealous, and their imperfect knowledge does not pinch them.

Students in ancient times rendered service to their preceptor, acted according to his order and considered their preceptor's pleasure their own pleasure. They identified themselves in thought, principle and assumptions etc., with their preceptor. Therefore the student became an incarnation of his teacher (preceptor). Students thought that they could gain knowledge only by their preceptor's grace. It is also

a fact that knowledge which is gained by the preceptor's grace can't be gained by one's own labour and effort.

Students in olden days thought of their teacher before beginning their study or work and so they were successful. Lava and Kuśa learnt the art of archery from their mother, Sītā and so they regarded her as their preceptor. When Lord Rāma released the horse of religious-sacrifice, Lava and Kuśa caught the horse and there was a fight between them and Śatrughna. At that time Lava and Kuśa at the beginning of the fight thought of their mother (preceptor) and got victory. They defeated the opponent army and arresting Hanumānjī (monkey-god) and Aṅgada presented them before Mother Sītā. It means that ancient students were grateful to their preceptor while modern students are ungrateful. They start agitation against their teachers. So their knowledge does not bear fruit. It is because of their pride that they think that they have become specially learned because of their study. So their learning is limited (meagre).

Students in ancient times led a self-controlled life and observed celibacy. They remained aloof from fashions and tastes while modern students have a craze for ornamentations, fashions, tastes and luxuries. So they don't lead a life of self-control and celibacy. A few of them hold the opinion that it is wrong to lead a self-controlled life because the senses have been given to enjoy sense-objects.

In ancient times students went to their teacher in his seminary to study. So they were humble like the mango tree which bends when it fruits well. But students of today call a teacher to their own home and say that they will

pay him less amount because he comes late. They instead of becoming polite become more impertinent like the castor-oil plant which instead of bending, goes straight upward when it fruits well.*

In the past students worked with a sense of duty. They considered their right to work only but never to the fruit thereof (Gītā 2/47). So they attained liberation (salvation). But students of today being attached to the fruit of actions are bound (Gītā 5/12).

Students in ancient times studied promptly and wholeheartedly by devoting their full time, while students of today get entangled in party politics and don't study promptly by concentrating their mind.

Students in ancient times were believers and their knowledge (science) proved useful here as well as hereafter. But students of today are mostly non-believers. Their knowledge (science) does not prove to be useful even here; then how will it be useful hereafter?

Question:—What is the difference between ancient and modern education?

Answer:—Ancient (spiritual) education provides peace to the self rooting out disquietude, wrangles and shortage. But modern (mundane) education is a means only to earn money, it does not provide peace, it rather enhances disquietude and wrangles. As more wealth enhances more greed and shortage, so does modern education enhance shortage.

* The fact is that there is pride in imperfect knowledge. The more perfection a man gains, the more polite and simpler he becomes.

Today in spite of several inventions a person is unable to attain peace because he is controlled by these inventions, he is not independent. But a man is not controlled by ancient knowledge, he rather realizes the self by it.

Ancient education enables a man to have an inclination to God while modern education conduces him towards the perishable.

Modern education is useful in worldly dealings. So importance should be attached to it only so far as dealings are concerned. It is wrong to attach the topmost priority (importance) to it. In fact education (knowledge) is that which leads a man to salvation (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1/19/41).

Question:—Who is called learned and when is a student (learner) called learned?

Answer:—Generally a person is considered learned in a subject if he possesses a thorough knowledge of that subject. As far as mundane knowledge is concerned, a person is known to be learned if he has knowledge of four Vedas, six scriptures and eighteen Purāṇas, Upapurāṇas etc. But a really learned man is he who knows the real (God) even though he has not got any formal education (Gītā 4/19; 5/18).

When a person considers a student more educated than himself, he calls him learned. But the student should not hold that he is indeed learned. He should try to find out his deficiency and should promptly try to remove that deficiency. But doing so his deficiency will be removed and he will become learned. But the thought that he is learned

will block his progress and will conduce him to have pride which is the root of all evils. Saint Tulasīdāsa declares :—

“Pride is the root of the worldly existence in the form of birth and death and it causes all sufferings and sorrows.”

(Mānasa 7/74/3)

‘God has aversion to pride and attachment to humility’ (Nārada-Bhaktisūtra 27). It means that God does not like pride as it leads a man to a downfall while He likes simplicity or humility as it leads him to salvation.

Question:—Which is better for a student—study of science or that of commerce?

Answer:—A student should study science and commerce both as both are necessary. Out of these two the study of commerce is more useful in dealings of practical life and it is of immediate use.

There is one special point which needs attention. If a person understands spirituality by going in its depth, his mundane as well as spiritual life is improved. But only the mundane knowledge does not lead to salvation because the limited knowledge bears limited fruit while the knowledge of the limitless (God) enables a man to understand everything in the right perspective.

Question:—Should a student study Medical Science and law?

Answer:—Study of Medical Science involves violence and study of law involves falsehood and fraud. There is nothing wrong if they are studied by renouncing violence, falsehood and fraud. People take it for granted that

violence, falsehood and fraud are essential in these professions and so they get involved in them as a part of their duty. Therefore there is predominance of violence, falsehood and fraud in these professions and people feel that it is difficult to work with honesty in them.

Question:—Is it necessary for a student to study Saṁskṛta?

Answer:—It is necessary for a student to know all languages, but the knowledge of Saṁskṛta is very necessary. The reason is that the wisdom which is available in the books of Saṁskṛta language is not found in the books of other languages. This language possesses great refinement and ethical decorum. The rules of its grammar are exact and perfect which are not found in any other language. Knowledge of Saṁskṛta-grammar enables one to learn other languages easily while the knowledge of other languages does not lead a learner to learn Saṁskṛta easily.

He who having abandoned his culture learns western knowledge and language becomes western himself. Indeed, he instead of gaining knowledge loses his identity. So a learner should gain knowledge and learn a language by safeguarding his culture.

Question:—What kinds of knowledge should a learner gain?

Answer:—A learner should gain every kind of knowledge. But the knowledge which entangles him in pleasure and prosperity is in fact ignorance. He need not gain such knowledge as that of dramas, cinemas and novels

etc., and he should not gain it. Only that knowledge should be gained which is not unfavourable to the attainment of one's real aim (God-realization).

Question:—What type of conduct should a student possess and how should he act?

Answer:—A man behaves and acts according to his egoism (sense of 'I'). So a student should predominantly think "I am a student and I have no other primary duty except studies." He should eat and drink for the bare maintenance of the body by remaining absorbed in studies. He should not waste even a single moment without studies. He should stick to studies every time even while performing the activities of daily routine such as sitting, moving, eating, drinking, sleeping and waking etc.

Self-control is very necessary for a student. When both Aśvinīkumāras, the physicians to gods went to sage Dadhyañ to gain knowledge-divine, he ordered them to observe celibacy. As ordered by the sage they observed celibacy and again went to him and requested him to impart knowledge-divine to them. The sage again sent them back ordering them to observe celibacy and they carried out his order. They again went to him the third time and again he sent them back to observe celibacy. Thus they observed celibacy (continence) for a hundred years. Again when they went to the sage to gain knowledge-divine, he said to them, "When you had gone, Indra, the king of gods came to me and requested me to impart him knowledge-divine. But I told him that he did not deserve it." Hearing this answer he got irritated and said, "If I don't deserve it, who deserves

it? If you impart knowledge-divine to anyone, I'll behead you." Thus the sage showed his inability to impart knowledge-divine and asked them to go to someone else to gain knowledge-divine. They said, "O noble sage, if you order, we can solve this problem. We will keep your head safe by cutting it off and fix another head to your body. You can impart us knowledge-divine with that head. When Indra, the king of gods cuts it off, we'll fix the original head to your body. Then Indra will have no right to cut off that head. Thus the problem will be solved and we'll gain knowledge-divine." The sage agreed. So they having cut off his head provided him with the head of a horse. When he began to impart knowledge-divine to them with the head of the horse, Indra, according to his pledge, cut off the head of the horse and threw it off. Aśvinīkumāras fixed the sage's head to his body again. Being angry with them, Indra deprived them of their share of the religious sacrifice. Afterwards when Aśvinīkumāras restored eyesight to the sage Cyavana, he enabled them to get their share of the religious sacrifice. Thus by observing celibacy Aśvinīkumāras gained knowledge-divine and also share of the religious sacrifice. It means that continence (celibacy) is a must for students because without it they can't hold knowledge.

A student should always be on the alert that he is a student. He who is a student does not waste even a single moment without study. It is said that knowledge and wealth should be gained in small measures steadily and he who wastes small measure can gain neither knowledge nor wealth.

There is a saying that grammar is learnt by learning

the rules by heart, by questioning teachers and by reflecting upon the lesson which a learner has learnt. Similarly it has been said about a student of grammar that he should look at the sky so that he may neither feel drowsy nor may have projections and distractions, because shutting of eyes conduces to drowsiness while opening of eyes conduces him to the thought of the world.

It is mentioned in 'Cāṇakyanīti' that a student should totally renounce attachment to pleasure because he who hankers after pleasure can't gain knowledge and he who wants to gain knowledge can't enjoy pleasure (10/3).

Study is an austerity which is totally free from pleasure. When a student has not to derive any pleasure, there is no question for him to indulge in fun, display, movies and entertainment on television etc. They are to be totally renounced because they besides wasting time leave an impression which is a great impediment to studies. So a student should stick to studies by remaining totally indifferent to the world, holding the view that the world does not exist for him and he does not exist for the world. Thus he will become learned because a good student becomes a good scholar.

A student should have the only aim of study or God-realization because 'determinate intellect is one pointed' (Gītā 2/41). All his actions should lead him to the attainment of his aim. When he possesses such promptness and determinate intellect, then God, saints (great souls), righteousness (Dharma), scriptures and ethics etc., all prove to be favourable to him and he attains his aim without doubt.

The five characteristics of a student are as follows:—

(1) Carefulness like that of a crow:—A crow is very careful in every activity. It is so careful that no one can easily catch it. Similarly a student should always be careful in his studies without wasting even a single moment.

(2) Attention like that of a heron:—A heron moves slowly in water but it pays attention to a fish only. Similarly a student while performing all activities such as eating and drinking etc., should pay attention to his studies only.

(3) Sleep like that of a dog:—A dog does not sleep soundly being carefree. It gets a light sleep. Similarly a student should not sleep soundly being carefree, he should get a light sleep which is necessary for health.

(4) Food in small quantity:—A student should neither overeat nor underfeed. His diet should be regulated and reasonable so that he may neither feel lazy nor think of the empty stomach.

(5) Celibacy: — A student should observe celibacy.

Question :— What are the factors which conduce a student to progress ?

Answer :— There are seven factors which conduce a student to progress. They are as follows:—

(1) Enthusiasm:—A student should have enthusiasm for studies because for an enthusiastic person even a difficult task becomes easy while without enthusiasm even an easy work becomes difficult.

(2) Lack of procrastination:—A student should work

very promptly and carefully. He should not devote much time to the work which needs less time. He who devotes more time to the work which can be done in less time is ruined.

(3) Right knowledge of the method:—A student should know the right method of performing an activity such as ablution, eating, drinking, walking and worship etc., properly and should act accordingly.

(4) Freedom from addiction:—A student should not be addicted to evils. Gambling, drinking, eating meat, prostitution, hunting (murder), stealing and adultery are the seven evils which lead to the foulest of hells. Besides them use of tea, coffee, opium; smoking, playing cards and 'Caupada' (a game like back gammon played with three long dice), fun, frolic, cinema, prattle and futile reflection etc., which are impediments to spiritual progress and honest livelihood, are all evils and a student should not be addicted to anyone of them.

(5) Bravery:—A student should possess bravery while performing every activity without any cowardice.

(6) Gratefulness:—A student should always feel grateful to his benefactor, he should never be ungrateful to him, he should show respect to him.

(7) Firmness in friendship:—A student should offer the hand of fellowship to his friend in all circumstances. As travellers seek a hospice, so does perfection seek a person possessing the above-mentioned seven characteristics.

Question:—Should a student participate in politics?

Answer:—If a student participates in politics, he can't pay proper attention to his studies and spiritual practice etc., and thus his precious time which could be used to enable him to gain knowledge or realize God is wasted. By participating in politics he attaches importance to mundane materials which is an impediment to his studies and devotional practice.

Question:—Is it proper for students to form a Union?

Answer:—Students by forming a union become undisciplined and unrestrained. They perform acts of sabotage and cause loss to their own property because they are the future-owners of this property. How will students become responsible and good citizens if they participate in agitations against teachers, trouble passengers in trains and buses and shopkeepers in markets? How will they make a good society? And how can the country be good and progressive without a good society? Students are the root of the country. So their reform will lead the country to progress and they are responsible for this progress.

There is nothing wrong if students form a union to train themselves in military science in order to defend their community and society. They should always be on the alert to set things right. But it is wrong if by forming a union they show arbitrary conduct, rule over others by unlawful means, pressurize their teachers and insult or slight them.

It is also unjust to tolerate unjust and improper rules of the government. So students should always be bold and enthusiastic to oppose injustice.

Question:—What should be the daily routine of a student?

Answer:—He should rise early in the morning before sunrise. If he rises after the sunrise, he should observe fast throughout the day as penitence. He should make the best possible use of his time without wasting even a single moment. As soon as he gets up, he should recite the verse—“tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva, tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva. tvameva vidyā draviṇaṁ tvameva, tvameva sarvaṁ mama deva deva.”

“O Lord, You are my mother, You are my father, You are my brother, You are my friend, You are my knowledge, You are my wealth, You are all for me.” After reciting this verse he should bow to his parents, teachers and elders. Then he should perform activities such as ablution and bathing etc. After it according to the scriptural ordinance he should perform morning prayer, recite the ‘Gāyatrī’ verse and worship God. He should practise postures for health.

A student should learn his lesson so thoroughly that he may be able to explain it to others even without the book. The method to get mastery over the lesson is that he should revise the lesson, which he learnt during the day, when he goes to bed and again revise it when he gets up. By doing so he will be able to learn the lesson thoroughly without much labour. He should learn the lesson in the morning time because that is the best time when the lesson is learnt quickly.

A student should also perform the domestic duty according to the need of the hour as ordered by his parents

before he goes to school or college. He should reach there in time, bow to his teachers and study as they instruct. He should pay proper attention to what they teach, understand it and have a thorough grasp of the subject. If there is any doubt about the subject, he should get it removed by his teacher. He should leave no stone unturned in his studies.

A student should have so much confidence and enthusiasm that he can teach the topic, which he has learnt, to others. Thus having studied in the school or college he should come back home and take his meal with his parents with courtesy. The food eaten by him should be Sāttvika rather than Rājasika or Tāmasika (Gītā 17/8—10). Sāttvika food makes intellect Sāttvika (good) which is very useful for studies. It is said—“The kind of food a man eats, so is his intellect in the same way as an oil lamp having devoured darkness produces soot.”

After taking meal he should walk for a short while; and then he should lie straight while breathing eight times, should lie on the right hand side while breathing sixteen times and on the left hand side while breathing thirty-two times. Then he should rise and start his studies etc. In the evening time he should perform ‘Sandhyā’ (evening prayer) and recite ‘Gāyatrī’ verse. It is said about this ‘Sandhyā’ (prayer) that in the morning the ‘Sandhyā’ performed in star-lit morning is superior, with the disappearance of stars it is medium and after sunrise it is inferior. Similarly the evening ‘Sandhyā’ is said to be superior if it is performed in sunlight, medium at sunset and inferior in star-light.

Therefore as far as possible a student should perform superior prayer (Sandhyā).

After dinner also he should walk for a while. Then he should study his books as well as the scriptures such as the Gītā and the Rāmāyaṇa etc. After that he should go to bed reflecting on his studies and on the scriptures.

Student life is the base of a human being. If it is noble, the whole life will be noble. So a student should very carefully make his sentiments and conduct Sāttvika (good or pure). In the Bhāgavata it is mentioned:—

“Scripture, water, people, place, time, occupation, birth, meditation, sacred text (Mantra) and past influence—if these ten are Sāttvika (good), the mode of goodness is enhanced but if they are Rājasika and Tāmasika, the mode of passion and the mode of ignorance respectively are enhanced.”

Therefore if they are Sāttvika, intellect and nature will also be Sāttvika.

Question:—What should a student do for his intellectual and physical development?

Answer:—Meditation on the Supreme develops intellect. Therefore every student whether he wants to attain the mundane or the spiritual aim should meditate on the Supreme. We have noticed that those who perform worship, chant God’s name, meditate on God and perform such other spiritual activities never fail in examinations. The reason is that these activities develop the mode of goodness which

develops intellect. So even if a student devotes less time to studies, it proves much more fruitful.

Dependence on God specially develops intellect. The reason is that he who depends on God follows the right path. So every kind of thing or person or object or circumstance becomes favourable and helpful to him. Thus he spontaneously attains his aim. There are impediments in a person's life only so long as he does not decide the aim of his life. But when the destination is decided, there are no impediments at all.

When a student observes celibacy and leads a self-controlled life, he gains knowledge of several subjects even without study and effort. He grasps every subject very quickly.

Self-control is automatically conducive to good health. Physical strength which is gained by practising self-control and by eating Sāttvika food is not gained by leading an unrestrained life and by eating Rājasa or Tāmasa food in order to relish it. Self-control, celibacy, meditation on God and service to elders provide Sāttvika strength to the body, mind and heart. By this Sāttvika strength vices (evils) such as lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride and jealousy automatically subside and virtues such as patience, equanimity, quietude and happiness etc., are naturally cultivated. These virtues have a good effect on the gross body and a student possessing them naturally gets free from diseases. If he suffers from a disease as the fruit of his past evil actions, it does not affect his mental equilibrium.

A student should practise postures and breath-control regularly. They help him in studies because by removing heaviness and laziness they make the body light and active. Thus he remains energetic and enthusiastic and even a difficult task becomes easy for him. But he who lacks enthusiasm loses heart and for him even an easy work becomes difficult.

Question:—These days students are very much addicted to smoking and drinking, Why? How can they get rid of them?

Answer:—The reason is foolishness. Students by aping others get addicted to smoking and drinking but they themselves don't think that these intoxicants spoil intellect. So if they are addicted to them, how will they gain knowledge? Therefore they should neither smoke nor drink because smoking and drinking are harmful to intellectual, physical and mental health. In this connection parents and teachers should pay special attention to their children and see that they don't get spoiled.

Question:—A few students commit suicide while failing in an examination. Why? How to solve this problem?

Answer:—They commit suicide because their failure is an obstacle to their honour and praise which they desire. There is no joy in committing suicide. Those who try to commit suicide but somehow escape it explain that suicide involves great suffering. He who commits suicide commits the deadly sin of murdering a human being and in future he has to suffer the worst tortures. So students should study the sacred books and keep company with great souls. Their company can root out such sins (evils).

Question:—Should students take part in games and sports?

Answer:—Students should take part in those games and sports which lead to their physical or intellectual development. Games and sports should be regarded as exercise of the body rather than the means to indulge in party politics which is conducive to conflicts. By having this sort of narrow group feeling their intellect, which should have been busy in leading them to progress, will be used in slighting and humiliating others. Thus it will prove very much harmful to them. They should never play cards and 'Caupada' (a game like back gammon played with three long dice). It means that they should not play such games as don't lead to physical and intellectual development, conduce to heedlessness, indolence and pleasures and waste time. So students should be very careful about their participation in games and sports etc.

Question:—How should students amuse themselves?

Answer:—They should amuse themselves by studies. Discussions (questions and answers) on studies are good amusements. They give birth to new ideas. For students cinema or T.V. etc., are the worst amusements as they spoil eyes and minds and leave bad impressions which are impediments to studies, adoration and meditation. There is no use stuffing the mind and intellect with rubbish. So students need not indulge in such amusements as cinema or T.V. etc.

Question:—How to gain knowledge?

Answer:—While attending the class a student should look at the eyes and face of the teacher and pay attention to each and every sentence uttered by him. He should listen promptly to him without thinking of anything else. He should not feel proud of his promptness in studies, thinking that he is superior to other students as he studies more promptly. Pride reduces knowledge to ignorance and that ignorance enhances pride.

He should revise the lesson time and again without the help of the book. He should study in such a way that he may impart this knowledge to others by teaching them with full confidence. Self study does not make the topic so clear as it is done by teaching others.

A student should be humble towards his teacher and others because knowledge leads to humbleness.

Question:—How to learn a subject by heart?

Answer:—In young age the meaning of a verse etc., becomes clear after it has been learnt by heart. But in old age it is easy to learn by heart after knowing its meaning.

Morning is the best time for it as a lesson is easily learnt in the morning time. Therefore a student should rise at 3 or 3.30 A.M. and after ablution, wash and cleaning the mouth with water should start learning the lesson by heart. While learning a verse he should first learn the first foot of the verse. When he has learnt it, he should learn the second foot. When the second foot has been learnt, then he should learn the first and the second feet together by heart without looking at the book. Similarly he should learn the third foot

and then the fourth foot separately. When he has learnt them separately by heart, then he should learn both of them together by heart without the help of the book. In the same way he should learn the second verse. Then he should learn both the first and the second verses together without the book. Then having learnt the third verse by heart, he should revise the first, the second and the third verses without the book. Thus he should learn as many verses as he has to learn and then he should stop. Before going to bed he should once again revise the verses, which he learnt, without the book and then he should sleep. When he rises in the morning, he should again revise those memorized verses. Thus he will be able to learn the verses in a very quick succession.

The verses which have been recently learnt by heart, should be recited three or four times a day for three or four days without the book, and the verses which were learnt in the past should also be revised once a day without the book. A student should form the habit of revising the verses, which he has learnt, without the book. If a student revises the topic learnt by heart looking at the book, he will forget the lesson in a few days.

The second method of learning a lesson by heart is that a student should read (recite) the lesson everyday looking at the book. For example—if a person wants to learn the Gītā by heart, he should recite all verses of the Gītā attentively by looking at the book everyday. This process should continue for a year. After a year he should recite all the verses without the book. If he forgets any verse he should learn that verse or a foot of that verse

at that moment and then continue his recitation. Thus when he has learnt the whole Gītā by heart, he should continue reciting whole of the Gītā without the book. By doing so, he will not forget the Gītā. But if he recites by reading from the book, he will forget it.

Question:—How to develop the power of memorizing?

Answer:—Power of memory (intellect) can be developed by observing celibacy. Preservation of semen (sperm) provides a special power (vigour) which develops intellect. An elephant possesses more physical power than a lion but as far as vigour (vitality) is concerned, a lion is more vigorous because a lion has sexual intercourse with a lioness only once in life. Thus preservation of semen in a lion provides special vigour to him. Similarly by observing celibacy a student's vigour increases which develops his intellect, and virtues such as enthusiasm, patience and quietude etc., are cultivated in him.

The less desire a person has for pleasures, the more helpful it is in observing celibacy. Sound, touch, sight, taste and smell—these five sense enjoyments and honour, hospitality and praise provide Rājasika joy (joy of the mode of passion). Heedlessness, indolence and sleep provide Tāmasika joy (joy of the mode of ignorance). Renunciation of Rājasika and Tāmasika joys is helpful in observing celibacy.

A deep study of books also develops intellect. Exclusive desire and devotion for God-realization also develop intellect because this devotion is of the self. So it naturally leads to self-control. When a man holds firm to his aim of God-realization, he becomes a man of steadfast wisdom, his

intellect becomes stable and so it becomes specially active to understand a subject.

The use of cow-milk, 'its churned butter, Brāhmī (a medicinal herb), sweet Baca and Śaṅkhapuspi (medicinal herbs) also develops intellect. Worship to (1) Lord Śiva (the destroyer), (2) Lord Gaṇeśa and (3) Goddess Sarasvatī (the goddess of learning) also develops intellect. The methods to worship them are as follows:—

(1) Every night at 11 P.M. a person should sit on a woollen cloth or on any cloth with his face towards north-east side and chant the sacred text 'om namaḥ śivāya' by counting all beads of the rosary made of 'Rudrākṣa' (seed of a tree used for making rosaries worn by Śaivites) 120 times. By following this routine continuously for six months, intellect is developed and the cherished objective is attained. If this sacred text is chanted by sitting on the land along the side of a water-channel or by standing in the flow of water, greater success is achieved.

The ceremony of chanting the sacred text should be begun on the thirteenth day of a dark fortnight. If it is begun on the 'Śivarātri' (a Hindu festival sacred to Lord Śiva), it is excellent. It can also be begun on some monday but it is better if it is begun on a monday of the month of Śrāvaṇa (fifth month of the Hindu calendar) and Lord Śiva should be worshipped before this ceremony is started. During this ceremony the person should keep fast on the thirteenth day of both the dark and the bright fortnights. On the day of fasting he should eat fruit-diet only once. But at one time overeating is not proper. It is better to

have a light fruit-diet two times a day than overeating once.

(2) Everyday in the morning a person being free from ablution and bath etc., should sit on a red cloth (seat) with his face towards the east and should recite the sacred text 'om gam gaṇapataye namaḥ' by counting all the beads of a rosary made of 'Rudrākṣa' or coral at least twenty-one times. By following this routine continuously for six months, his intellect gets developed.

This ceremony should be begun on the fourth day of the bright fortnight. It is excellent if it is begun on the fourth day of the fortnight of the month of 'Bhādrapada' (sixth month of the Hindu calendar). At the beginning of the ceremony Lord Gaṇeśa should be worshipped and during this ceremony he should fast on the fourth day of the dark and bright fortnights.

The recitation of 'Gaṇeśastotra' (eulogy of Lord Gaṇeśa) 'Gaṇeśāṣṭaka', (eight verses eulogizing Lord Gaṇeśa) and 'Gaṇeśasahasranāma' (one thousand names of Lord Gaṇeśa) etc., also develops intellect.

(3) Every morning the person wearing red clothes should sit on a red cloth (seat) with his face towards the east and should recite the sacred text 'aim śrīsarvasvatyai namaḥ' by counting all the beads of a rosary made of 'Rudrākṣa' or coral eleven times or twenty-one times or fifty-one times or a hundred and one times or as many times as he can. By following this routine for about a year intellect is developed.

This ceremony should be begun on the eighth or the ninth

day of the bright fortnight. At the beginning of the ceremony goddess Sarasvatī should be worshipped with red flowers.

As soon as a person rises in the morning, he should think that 'Aim' is written on his tongue and beholding it on the tongue with the mind, should recite this basic sacred text a hundred and eight times. It also develops intellect.

Any of the ceremonies pertaining to Lord Śiva or Lord Gaṇeśa or Goddess Sarasvatī should be begun with a resolve that he is performing it in order to develop his intellect.

The recitation of whole of the Rāmacaritamānasa every month for a year (twelve recitations) also develops intellect. If whole of the Rāmacaritamānasa is recited everyday for nine days or there are nine recitations by reciting whole of the Rāmacaritamānasa once in nine days, it also develops intellect. If the Rāmacaritamānasa is recited a hundred and eight times in any of the above-mentioned two ways, it besides developing intellect, brings in great affinity for God.

As far as the name of God (divine name) is concerned, it is the best. It is the life-breath of knowledge (Vidyā) bride. It is the experience of several saints and great souls that by reciting the divine name a singularity is developed in the person. There was a recluse who once on the holy occasion of Kumbha fair went to Tryambakeśvara (Nāsika). There some men of great learning were discussing a deep and scholarly topic in order to come to some conclusion. The recluse interrupted their discussion. Those learned persons said to him, "O recluse, you can't understand the discussion of these men of great learning. You should go from here and devote yourself to devotion and adoration."

In fact the recluse was illiterate. He went to the jungle and having made a hut of straw and dry grass began to recite the sacred text of sixteen words “Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare.” It was the outcome of this recitation that he had knowledge of Saṁskṛta without study and began to speak Saṁskṛta. This anecdote has been written by a learned man. He writes, “Once I went to Dvārakā. I lost my way and went astray in the jungle. By chance I reached the hut of that recluse. That recluse talked to me in Saṁskṛta. I asked him what his qualification was in Saṁskṛta. He answered that it was because of chanting of the divine name that he had gone through several Saṁskṛta books without studying Saṁskṛta and at that time he was studying ‘Advaitasiddhi’.

Therefore a student should certainly remember, chant and sing the divine name.

(1) Remembrance—Calling the divine name back to mind is remembrance.

(2) Chant—It can be of three types (a) chanting the name by mind is mental chant. In it there is no movement of lips and throat nor is any sound produced (b) If the divine name is chanted so loudly that the sound reaches only one’s own ears, it is called ‘Upāṁśu’ chant (c) If it is chanted a bit more loudly so that the sound is heard by others, it is called common chant. ‘Upāṁśu’ chant is ten times more glorious than common chant while mental chant is ten times more glorious than ‘Upāṁśu’ chant.

(3) Singing! (Kīrtana)—In it the divine name and God’s

glories are sung by making musical sounds with musical instruments. It is of three kinds—(a) Singing the divine names ‘Rāma’, ‘Kṛṣṇa’ etc., loudly by making musical sounds with a set of musical instruments is ‘Nāma-Kīrtana’, (b) ‘Singing glories and virtues of God in the form of verses and hymns is ‘Guṇa-Kīrtana’ (c) Singing in which God’s sports (pastimes) of His childhood or boyhood are described is called ‘Līlā-Kīrtana.’

Out of these three—remembrance, chant and singing, the more useful is that in which one’s mind gets more absorbed.

Question:—Which divine name should a student chant?

Answer:—A student should recite (chant) the name in which he has more faith, more belief and more devotion. The more he is absorbed in a name, the more useful it will prove for him, so he should recite the divine name of his own choice.

Question:—What is the duty of a student to his teacher?

Answer:—As a student treats his parents with reverence, so should he show reverence to his teacher. In these days a teacher can be of any social order (Varna). If the teacher belongs to the priest class (Brāhmaṇa) and the student has received good training (education) from him, he should regard him as his teacher throughout his life. But if the teacher does not belong to the priest class, he belongs to a lower social order than the student, the student should treat him with reverence while studying and remain grateful to him forever after the completion of his studies but he

need not regard him as his preceptor afterwards.

Question:—In these days in schools and colleges a student receives knowledge of different subjects from different teachers. Whom should he regard as his teacher?

Answer:—He should certainly show reverence and feel grateful to them according to the benefit he has derived from them.

There are three means of receiving knowledge from a teacher.

Knowledge is gained by rendering service to the teacher. If a student possesses money, he should receive knowledge by paying money. If he himself has any knowledge and the other person needs this knowledge, he can give him his knowledge in exchange for his knowledge. Besides them there is no other means to receive knowledge.

If there is a learned man who is interested in teaching others without receiving any payment, knowledge can be received from him also. But the student will remain indebted to him. When the student becomes learned and becomes famous for his learning, and the learned man who imparted him the knowledge, having heard his fame gets pleased, the student can get out of debt. He can also be free from his debt if having become learned, he also imparts knowledge to others. It means that as offspring can be free from their debt to their parents by pleasing them through service, though they can't pay them their debt, so can the student be free from his debt which he owes to the learned man who taught him without receiving

any sort of payment but he can't pay him the debt.

If a student has a burning desire and devotion for gaining knowledge, God makes arrangement for him somehow or the other by making a teacher available—‘A true lover meets the object of his love without doubt’. Moreover God (Lord Kṛṣṇa) Himself is the world-teacher. A student can also gain knowledge by only chanting the divine name. When no teacher could be available to a saint who wanted to learn grammar, Sage Patañjali himself taught him ‘Mahābhāṣya’ (the great elaborative commentary on Paṇini’s Aṣṭādhyāyī). Śukadeva himself taught the Bhāgavata to Carāṇa Dāsa.

Question:—With whom should a student have friendly relations?

Answer:—He should have friendly relations with those students who love knowledge, devote themselves to studies, and lend a helping hand to others. He should not keep company with those who are not devoted to studies. But he should try to find out the remedy for their slackness. If he finds one, he should put it into practice. As far as his own studies are concerned, he should be very careful.

Question:—What is the duty of a student to his friends?

Answer:—He should have fair dealings with them for their welfare by renouncing his selfishness and pride. He should think that all his friends and companions should become noble and learned so that he may compete with them and he himself may become more learned. It means that if his friends don't rise, he will have no desire to rise

higher, he will feel satisfied with his knowledge and his progress will stop. But if his friends progress, he will get an opportunity to excel them. Therefore a student from his heart should wish progress to his friends and should feel very happy at their progress.

A student should behave towards his friends as Lord Kṛṣṇa behaved towards His friend, Sudāmā. In the Rāmacaritamānasa the characteristics mentioned of a friend are as follows—

“A friend should divert his friend from the wrong path to the right one. Having concealed his vices he should reveal his virtues. He should have fair dealings with him without any doubt and do good to him according to his power. He should love him a hundred times more in adversity. The Vedas declare that these are the characteristics of a noble friend” (Kīṣkindhā. 7/2-3).

Question:—What is the duty of a student to his parents?

Answer:—Every student whether he wants to gain spiritual knowledge or mundane one should please his parents because their pleasure helps him in studies. In the scripture it is mentioned.

“Age, knowledge, glory and power—these four are enhanced of the person whose nature is to bow to his elders and who always serves them” (Manu. 2/121).

If the parents because of certain circumstances ask him to stop his studies, he should seek permission with a tearful face, to continue his studies because that is the most suitable period for studies. If the examination is at hand, he should

burn the midnight oil for studies. Sometimes it is noticed that mothers are worried lest their sons should fall ill by burning the midnight oil for studies. The fact is that hard study has a bad effect on health only if he has no self-interest in studies but he is forced to study hard, otherwise there is no question of his falling ill.

Noble men are those who don't give up the attempt in despair in the face of difficulties. When a man works promptly and whole-heartedly, it becomes natural for him to be advanced and victorious in every work. Such a man is noble and he proves to be an ideal for others. Therefore a student should form a nature like this.

A student should possess the same patience and enthusiasm in failure as he has in success. Thus a student who performs his task of gaining mundane knowledge by studying with sincerity and enthusiasm becomes well-versed in spiritual knowledge. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā declares, "By doing duty without attachment man verily attains the Supreme" (Gītā 3/19).

Question:—What is the difference between a spiritual student and a striver (Sādhaka)?

Answer:—There is no difference between the two. Both are one and the same. In fact the only aim of human birth is God-realization. So every human being is a student, a striver by birth. It is upto him whether he practises spiritual discipline or not.

Spiritual Student

The aims of a mundane student and a spiritual student are different but their methods of achieving their aims are almost the same. The only difference is that a spiritual student works more speedily because every activity for him is a spiritual practice.

For a spiritual student (striver) unfavourable circumstances are more useful because in unfavourable circumstances old sins are wiped out and new enthusiasm is born, while in favourable circumstances the reward of old virtues is destroyed and there is possibility of the birth of evils such as heedlessness, indolence and attachment to pleasures etc. Therefore, for a spiritual student unfavourable circumstances come in the form of austerity which is very helpful in spiritual discipline. If we have a look at the lives of saints and great souls such as Dhruva, Prahlāda and Mīrābāī etc., we come to know that they faced unfavourable circumstances which enhanced their faith in God. Thus unfavourable circumstances instead of proving to be obstructive are helpful for a striver or an ascetic (Yogī) while they are obstacles for a voluptuary (Bhogī). It means that unfavourable circumstances are conducive to renunciation of the world.

Question—What should be the daily routine of a spiritual student?

Answer—The significant fact for a spiritual student is that he should firmly hold the belief that he has only to

realize God. So he performs every activity in order to attain that aim. First after rising early in the morning he bows to God with reverence and offers the prayer to Him, "O Lord! I wish to continue my activities according to Your ordinance. You have revealed Yourself in different forms for my salvation. Your only aim is to liberate me from the bondage. If I am a listener, You become an orator; while if I become an orator, You as a curious listener, put questions to me in order to impart me knowledge (wisdom). At that time if I hold the opinion that I am removing the doubt of the audience and satisfying their curiosity, it is a blunder on my part. The fact is that You become inquisitive and feign ignorance in order to impart knowledge to me and as a listener, in order to encourage me to march forward, You declare that Your doubt has been removed and You are satisfied with the explanation."

"You reveal Yourself for me according to the need of the hour even as food and as water in case of hunger and thirst. You also manifest Yourself as honour and fame if I hanker after them. It means that You carry on Your different forms of pastime in the form of sentient or insentient, moving or unmoving beings in order to conduce me to God-realization. When I forget this fact, You wipe out my ignorance through the medium of the scriptures, saints, preceptors, elders, verses of the Gītā and intuitional inspiration."

"I perform all activities such as ablution, bathing, walking, moving, recitation of the Gītā and the Rāmāyaṇa and daily ceremonial routine etc., according to

Your ordinance and in order to please You only. In fact I should perform all actions in order to please You and I also do so. But sometimes I forget to do so by accepting existence of the world and by attaching importance to it. Again You give me warning.

A striver should perform every important or unimportant action whether scriptural or mundane or practical or physical only in order to please God. His daily routine throughout his life should aim only at pleasing God. He should not perform any activity day and night against God's ordinance. He should always feel "I am only God's; I live in His house only. I eat the food only offered to Him; while talking (speaking) I sing His glory and the only aim of my adoration and meditation etc., is to please Him." In the Bhāgavata it is mentioned:—

"Whatever a man does with his body, speech, mind, senses, intellect, egoism or innate nature, he should offer it to the Primeval Being, Lord Nārāyaṇa holding the opinion that it is only for Him" (11/2/36).

He should hold the opinion that he himself does not offer it but God Himself with the power and intellect offered by Him makes him offer it to Him. So he should feel pleased by thinking of His grace. Therefore for himself he has to do nothing. There is neither any action nor object nor condition nor circumstance for him. All the actions are being performed by the power given by Him. Even the food eaten by him and such other activities are performed only by His power.

Thus perfection is attained when all actions change into

occurrences and occurrences change into God. In that state there remains neither 'I' nor 'Mine'. This state in the Gītā has been said 'Fixation of mind and intellect on Me' (8/7, 12/14). In that state there remains only the abode of bliss or supreme blessedness where mind and intellect have no access.

Students study, teachers teach, warriors fight while farmers are engaged in farming. Thus men or women perform different actions according to the place, time, conditions and circumstances and those actions go on changing. But their aim is only one which is God-realization and it never changes.

Question:—How does a spiritual student (striver) behave?

Answer:—Outwardly there does not appear any difference between the conduct (behaviour) of a common gentle man and that of a striver because both of them behave well as both possess divine traits. But their aims are different.

A common man of gentle nature has the mundane aim to win honour, prestige and trust etc., and so he has fair dealings with other persons. But a striver aims at equanimity in success and failure, honour and dishonour, and praise and blame etc. The more equanimity he attains, the higher his spiritual discipline is; and the higher his spiritual discipline is, the more equanimous (free from modifications) he becomes. There are three characteristics of their modifications (flaws)—(1) They are less in number, (2) They are less forceful, (3) They are short lived. They continuously go on decreasing. Sometimes a striver feels

that the number of flaws in him is increasing. But the striver need not feel perturbed. The reason is that he feels a little flaw (blemish) as a huge one because he is almost free from all flaws. He need not feel penitent nor should he change his spiritual discipline. But he should go on practising the same spiritual discipline of his own promptly.

One more point needs attention. The human life has been bestowed upon only for God-realization. So mundane desires may or may not be fulfilled but spiritual perfection is certainly attained. There is no room for disappointment in the spiritual path.

In the Gītā it is mentioned:—

“An agent, free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with firmness and zeal and unaffected by success and failure, is said to be Sāttvika” (18/26).

According to this verse a striver being free from worry should remain engaged in his spiritual practice which leads him to higher spiritual practice and his discrimination works as a guide for him. In practical life such incidents happen to occur that make him alert.

Question:—What is the conduct (behaviour) of a student who follows ‘Karmayoga’ (the Discipline of Action)?

Answer:—In his behaviour there is predominance of renunciation of his selfish motive and the welfare of others. So he specially serves the world. While rendering service to others he is not proud of his service. When his spiritual practice attains a higher stage, he holds the opinion that the

materials such as the body etc., with which he renders service to others belong to them only. Thus his materials (objects) and actions are offered to others to render service to them viz., his feeling of 'I'-ness ceases to exist for those materials. At last his individuality (egoism) by melting away is destroyed and he, in the form of service is identified with him who is worth to be served. Similarly at last a Jñānayogī's individuality is destroyed and he by becoming knowledge becomes an embodiment of knowledge while a Bhaktiyogī by becoming devotion gets identified with God.

Question:—What is the conduct of the student who follows 'Jñānayoga' (Discipline of Knowledge)?

Answer:—He is specially indifferent, neutral and immutable. He has a natural inclination to lead a secluded life. If he does not get an opportunity to live in seclusion, he feels a little bored. But by and by that boredom decreases and at last it is destroyed. The reason of his boredom is his assumed affinity for the body while his main aim is to renounce his affinity for the body.

His treatment with his own body is the same as it is with the bodies of others. So he is not affected by any kind of treatment with his body on the analogy of other bodies. He realizes that 'the Supreme Self neither acts nor is tainted' (Gītā 13/31) and thus he naturally becomes free from the notion of doership and his intellect is not tainted (Gītā 18/17).

Question:—What is the conduct of a student following 'Bhaktiyoga' (Discipline of Devotion)?

Answer:—He is specially modest in his conduct. The

world for him is nothing but the divine play. Beholding God's grace in every circumstance he remains specially happy and carefree. He always keeps an eye on God's grace. He is not much affected if an incident occurs against his body, senses and mind and finally he is not affected at all. Kākabhuṣuṇḍi is an example. When a curse was called down upon him, he felt neither afraid nor destitute but he regarded it as God's grace. Thus a devotee specially realizes God's grace in unfavourable circumstances and by depending on God's grace he remains free from fear, sorrow, worry and doubt.

Question:—Does a student following the paths of Action, Knowledge and Devotion need a preceptor (spiritual guide)?

Answer:—Everyone needs a preceptor. But a student should feel neither disappointed nor discouraged for God-realization if a preceptor to one's own satisfaction is not available because this human body has been bestowed upon only to realize God. If a preceptor (spiritual guide) to one's own satisfaction is not available, one depending upon God, by considering Lord Kṛṣṇa the preceptor, should be engaged in spiritual practice because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the preceptor of the whole world. So He is everyone's preceptor as no one is separate from the world.

Infact there is need of a preceptor in all the three Yogas (paths). But it does not mean that a preceptor is not available. A preceptor is available because God is ever present. The guidance which can't be received from a preceptor is available from God through one's own heart's inspiration or through the scriptures or through any other

incident. God imparts this guidance by several methods. Sometimes the conversations between two persons solves his problem. Sometimes the solution of the problem comes by the sudden study of a book. God adopts different methods to guide a striver because 'He is the disinterested friend of all beings' (Gītā 5/29).

This is an uncommon characteristic of God's nature that unlike human beings, He does not want anyone to feel obliged to Him for the good He does to him. As the sun does not feel proud of itself by providing light to the world, so does God never feel proud of Himself because He does good to all; good is automatically and naturally done by Him and light is also provided by Him. He, who has an inclination to God, specially, receives that light. Therefore a striver should never get discouraged and disappointed if a preceptor is not available to him.

God has provided everyone with a preceptor in the form of discrimination to distinguish the real from the unreal, righteousness from unrighteousness, what ought to be done from what ought to be refrained from, and what should be owned from what should be disowned. If a man honours that discrimination, that discrimination is enhanced and at last that discrimination changes into knowledge-divine.

Question:—Can the same preceptor impart training (knowledge) of Karmayoga (Discipline of Action), Jñānayoga (Discipline of Knowledge) and Bhaktiyoga (Discipline of Devotion)?

Answer:—Yes, he can. But he is more expert and experienced in the same discipline which he himself has

followed. So he can very easily impart knowledge of that discipline, though he can also guide in other disciplines. Though great souls have different inclinations as some of them are indifferent and some are benevolent yet they can undoubtedly impart knowledge to the inquisitive strivers according to their inquisitiveness. As there is secretion of milk in the teat of a cow when her calf comes to her, so is knowledge automatically revealed in the great soul when an inquisitive striver approaches him. Though the liberated souls have nothing to do for their own sake yet they live only for inquisitive strivers in the same way as a mother lives for her offspring.

Question:—Can a student receive knowledge of all the three Disciplines?

Answer:—Yes, he can; but his faith (devotion) in anyone of the three Disciplines is more useful and better. A striver's faith in one Discipline will make other Disciplines helpful in his path (Discipline).

When a striver practises one spiritual discipline predominantly, other spiritual disciplines automatically follow him. He can't remain completely devoid of them. If he practises Karmayoga, he can't remain devoid of Jñānayoga and Bhaktiyoga. If he practises Jñānayoga he can't remain devoid of Karmayoga and Bhaktiyoga. Similarly if he practises Bhaktiyoga, he can't remain devoid of Karmayoga and Jñānayoga. The reason is that 'Yoga' is essentially the same. Lord Kṛṣṇa defines Yoga—'the state which is free from the contact of sorrow is called Yoga' (Gītā 6/23). It means that the root of sorrow lies in the

contact (union) of the Self with the world; and as soon as there is disunion (disconnection from union), there will be realization of union with God.

Question:—What types students deserve to practise Karmayoga, Jñānayoga and Bhaktiyoga respectively?

Answer:—He who is attached to the world but wants to attain salvation (God-realization) deserves to practise Karmayoga. He who is naturally dispassionate (free from attachment to the world) deserves to practise Jñānayoga. He who is neither too much dispassionate nor too much attached deserves to practise Bhaktiyoga.

Question:—Which scriptures (holy books) should be specially studied by the student following these Yogas (Disciplines)?

Answer:—They should specially study the Gītā because this small book contains all the requisite material (guidance) for the three Yogas. Though Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained them in brief, yet there is full description of the three Yogas. So the Gītā is sufficient for a striver.

Whatever discipline (path) a striver may follow, if he studies the Gītā by depending on the holy feet of the Lord, he will certainly find the entire requisite material in the Gītā. It is good if he also studies other sacred books such as the Rāmāyaṇa and the Bhāgavata etc., but in fact nothing remains to be known on studying the Gītā itself.

Introduction to the Gītā

Bhagavadgītā (Song of the Lord) or Gītā, is a part of the great epic, Mahābhārata. It is in the form of a dialogue between Lord Kṛṣṇa (incarnation of Bhagavān Viṣṇu) and Arjuna, the bravest of the five Pāṇḍava brothers. Over the dispute for their kingdom, Pāṇḍavas and Kauravas, the descendants of Kuru, decided to settle the issue by war and then the two opposing armies were arrayed at the battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

Though prepared for war, as Arjuna saw his kith and kin, and his preceptors and instructors, standing face to face, ready to fight him, he hesitated to enter into the battle and gain victory at the expense of their lives. It is then that Lord Kṛṣṇa, while as Arjuna's charioteer, discoursed with him on the importance of discharging one's duties irrespective of the consequences and having faith in God. After clearing his doubts, Arjuna joins the battle and gains a crushing victory over the Kauravas. It is this dialogue that is reproduced in the Gītā.

The traditionally known author of the Gītā is Ṛṣi Vedavyāsa, who it is said, compiled the divine expressions in the form of the Gītā, which presently consists of 18 chapters and 708 verses.

In introducing the Gītā to young readers and for their benefit, a translation in English of the 'Gītā-Sāra', as the

‘Essence of Gītā’, written by Parama Śraddheya Swāmī Rāmasukhadāsajī Mahārāja and published by Gita Press, is reproduced below :

The Essence of Gītā

Chapter 1

It is because of worldly delusion (Moha) that a person finds himself at a loss to decide what to do and what not. In this dilemma one loses his sense of duty. However, in reality a person should neither be a prisoner of delusion nor that of pleasure.

Chapter 2

All bodies are perishable, while the soul abiding within is not. Either to give importance to this understanding (Viveka), or to perform one’s duty, offer two alternatives, to relieve a person from worry or sorrow.

Chapter 3

By promptly performing one’s duty towards others, without desiring any reward in return, a person does a good turn to himself.

Chapter 4

There are two ways to free oneself from the bondage of action (Karma), one is to understand the intrinsic nature of an act and to perform the same unselfishly, and the second, is to experience the divine essence.

Chapter 5

A person should not become happy or sad, when he faces favourable or unfavourable circumstances, as such feelings do not allow one to rise above the mundane world

and advance to experience the supreme bliss (Paramānanda).

Chapter 6

By any form of meditation, a person's mind should achieve equanimity because without that, one cannot remain even-minded and serene (Nirvikalpa).

Chapter 7

God is everything and to recognise this fact is the highest form of spiritual discipline.

Chapter 8

A person's thinking, at the last moments of life, influences his passage from this world. So one must perform his duties, remembering God all the time, and thus he would be reminded of God on his passing away.

Chapter 9

All persons are entitled to realise God, no matter what caste, creed, community, country or guise etc., they belong to.

Chapter 10

Wherever, one notices something unusual, special, beautiful, important, powerful etc., in the world, one should take it to be a reflection of God, and accordingly think of Him.

Chapter 11

Only after acknowledging the world as a manifestation of God, could a person behold the cosmic form (Virāṭ-Rūpa) of God.

Chapter 12

Every devotee, who dedicates himself, his body, senses, mind, and intellect to God, endears himself to God.

Chapter 13

In the world, the divine essence alone is, worth realising, and having done so, one becomes immortal.

Chapter 14

To free oneself from worldly attachment, a person must transcend the three modes (Guṇas) of nature i.e., goodness (Sāttvika), passionate (Rājasika) and ignorance (Tāmasika). Exclusive devotion enables a person to be independent of the influence of these modes.

Chapter 15

The creator of this world and its supreme lord is God alone. Cognisant of this, one must in unabounded faith, worship God and then nothing remains to be done.

Chapter 16

Persons, because of their evil tendency and misdeeds go through eighty-four lakh births and to hells and thus suffer. To free oneself from this cycle of births and deaths, it is essential to shun them.

Chapter 17

Whatever good work a person of faith wishes to undertake, he should think of God first, recite His name and then proceed further.

Chapter 18

The essence of all scriptures, are the Vedas and that of the Vedas, are the Upaniṣads, while that of the Upaniṣads, is in the Gītā. The quintessence of Gītā, lies in a person's complete surrender to God. When a person wholly takes refuge in Him, God delivers him from all sins.

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Code		Code	
1318	Śrī Rāmacaritamānasa (With Hindi Text, Transliteration & English Translation)	783	Abortion Right or Wrong You Decide
1617	Śrī Rāmacaritamānasa A Romanized Edition with English Translation	455	Bhagavadgītā (With Sanskrit Text and English Translation) Pocket size
456	Śrī Rāmacaritamānasa (With Hindi Text and English Translation)	534	Bhagavadgītā (Bound)
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